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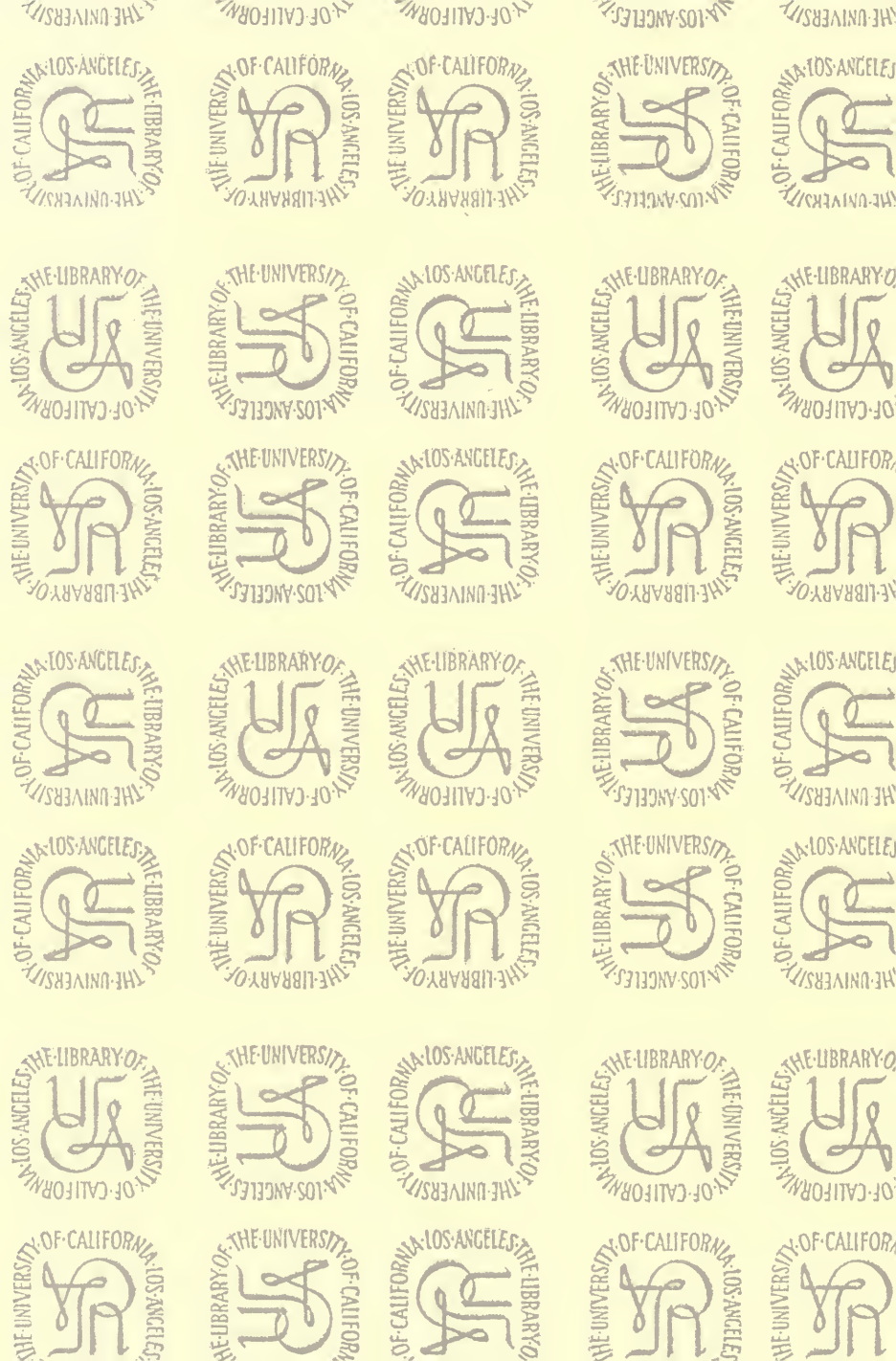
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THE MEMOIRS OF A WHITE ELEPHANT

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THE MEMOIRS
OF A
WHITE ELEPHANT

BY

JUDITH GAUTIER

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY S. A. B. HARVEY

ILLUSTRATED BY L. H. SMITH AND S. B. KITE

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1916

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FOREWORD

(*Avant-propos*)

We are told by writers of antiquity that elephants have written sentences in Greek, and that one of them was even known to speak. There is, therefore, nothing unreasonable in the supposition that the White Elephant of this history, the famous "*Iravata*" so celebrated throughout Asia, should have written his own memoirs.

The story of his long existence—at times so glorious, and at other times so full of misfortune—in the kingdom of Siam, and the India of the Maharajahs and the English, is full of most curious and interesting adventure.

After being almost worshipped as an idol, *Iravata* becomes a warrior; he is made prisoner with his master, whose life he saves, and whom he assists to escape.

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Later he is deemed worthy to be the guardian and companion of the lovely little Princess Parvati, for whose amusement he invents wonderful games, and to whom he renders a loving service.

We see how a wicked sentiment having crept into the heart of the faithful Elephant, usually so wise and good, he is separated for a long time from his beloved Princess, and meets with painful and trying experiences.

But at last he once more finds his devoted friend the Princess, and her forgiveness restores him to happiness.

J. G.

FOREWORD
TO THE AMERICAN EDITION

My Dear Children:—

This Story was written by Mademoiselle Gautier, a French lady who lives in Paris. She is very handsome, and very learned, and is able to write and speak Chinese, which is the most difficult language in the world.

She has also written beautiful tales of Persia, Japan, and other far-away countries.

This Story was meant for French children, but I have made it into English, so that my little American friends can have the pleasure of hearing all about "*Iravata*," the good and wise Elephant, and his friends, the *King* and *Queen of Golconda*, and the charming little *Princess Parvati*.

Iravata meets with many surprising adventures. At one time he becomes a "War-Ele-

phant," and goes into battle in magnificent armour carrying the King on his back. He fights tremendously, but nevertheless is taken prisoner, and the King, his master, is condemned to death by his cruel enemies. But the clever Elephant finds a way to liberate his Master, and they escape together, and after many adventures reach home safely.

Later on *Iravata* becomes restless and unhappy, and runs away, and after many wanderings, he joins a Circus. Here he performs many amusing feats. But, growing homesick, he is at last only too glad to return to his home in the Palace of Golconda, where he lives happily ever after.

S. A. B. H.

Atlantic City, 1916.

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THE MEMOIRS OF A WHITE ELEPHANT

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CHAPTER I

THE STUDENT OF GOLCONDA

First of all I must tell you how I learned to write. This knowledge came to me somewhat late in my long life, but it has to be mentioned at the outset, for although you men have taught my race to perform many laborious tasks, you have not been in the habit of sending us to school, and an elephant capable of reading and writing is a phenomenon so rare as to seem almost incredible. I say *rare*, for I have heard it stated that my case is not entirely unique. During my long association with mankind I have come to understand much of their speech. I am even acquainted with several languages; Siamese, Hindustani, and a little English.

I might have been able to speak; I attempted

to do so at times; but I only succeeded in producing such extraordinary sounds as set my teachers laughing, and terrified my companion elephants, if they chanced to hear me; for my utterances resembled neither their own language nor that of mankind!

I was about sixty years old (which is the prime of youth with us), when chance enabled me to learn letters, and eventually to write the words which I was never able to pronounce.

* * * * * * *

The enclosure reserved for me in the Palace of Golconda, where I was permitted to roam entirely at liberty, was bordered on one side by a wall of bricks enameled in blue and green. It was quite a high wall, but it reached only to my shoulder, so that I could, if inclined, look over the top very easily.

I spent much of my time at this place, owing to some tall tamarind trees, which cast a fresh and delicious shade all around.

I had plenty of leisure, indeed, I was actually idle, for I was rarely called upon except for pro-

cessions. So, after my morning bath had been taken, my toilet made, and my breakfast finished, my guardians, or rather my servants, were at liberty to sleep, or to go about visiting and amusing themselves—while I stood motionless under the trees, going over in my mind the many experiences of my past life.

Every day there arose from an adjoining courtyard merry shouts and laughter, which would be followed by a silence, and then by a monotonous chanting. It was a class of little boys who were reciting the Alphabet, for a school was being taught there.

Under shady trees, on turf covered here and there with small carpets, a number of children with red caps romped and played, when the Master was not there. As soon as he appeared all was silence, and he seated himself upon a larger rug, under an old tree.

On the trunk of the tree was fastened a white Tablet, on which he wrote with a red pencil.

I looked and listened, at first without much interest, noticing chiefly the mischievous antics of

the children, who made faces at me, and glanced over with all sorts of grimaces—exploding suddenly with laughter for which no cause was apparent. . . . Punishments rained! Tears succeeded laughter! And I, who felt myself somewhat the cause of the disturbance, no longer ventured to show myself. *But my curiosity was awakened.* The idea of trying to learn what was being taught to the small men became fixed in my mind.

I could not speak—but who knows?—I might learn to write!

Concealed in the foliage from the eyes of the frolicsome little urchins, I gave an extreme attention to the lessons—sometimes making such violent efforts to understand that I trembled from head to foot.

All that was required was simply to pronounce the letters of the Alphabet, one after another, and trace them on the white Tablet.

At night now, instead of sleeping, I exercised my memory; and when in spite of my endeavors I could not recall the form or the sound of a let-

ter, I uttered such cries of despair that my guardians were aroused.

One day there stood before the Tablet a boy who was quite large, but extremely stupid. He had stood for some minutes with his head hanging down, his finger in his mouth, shifting himself from one foot to the other in a sulky manner—*He did not know!*

All at once an impulse seized me. I extended my trunk over the wall, and taking the pencil gently, with the tip of my trunk, from the hand of the little dunce (somewhat excited by my own audacity), I traced on the white Tablet a gigantic "*E*" ! ! ! !

The stupefaction was such that it could only be manifested by profound silence, and gaping mouths.

Emboldened by success I seized the wet cloth with which the Tablet was cleaned, and effaced the "*E*" which I had drawn. Then, in smaller characters, and doing my very best, I wrote the entire Alphabet, from end to end.

This time the Master fell on his face, crying

out, "*A Miracle!*" and the children ran away, terrified.

As for me, I expressed my satisfaction by moving backward and forward my big ears.

The Teacher now rose trembling, detached the Tablet (being careful not to obliterate any of the writing), and, after saluting me most humbly, went away. A few moments later I saw my Mahout advancing towards me, and, without mounting, he led me through the great avenues of the park to the Entrance of the Palace.

Here ordinarily was seated my dear Mistress. But now she had left her couch, and, kneeling on a cushion, was examining the Tablet covered with letters which the Schoolmaster had brought her.

Standing around her were visitors, also looking on—several Hindus and an Englishman.

As soon as she saw me she ran to me, clapping her hands.

"*Is it true? Is it true?*" cried she. "*Iravata, did you really do it?*" I replied by winking my eyes and flapping my ears.

"*Yes!—He says yes!*" said my sweet Mistress, who always understood me.

But the Englishman shook his head, with an air of incredulity.

"In order to believe such a thing," said he, "I should have to see it with my own eyes—hearsay is not enough."

I attempted to efface the writing.

"No, no," said the Schoolmaster, removing it out of my reach.

"I saw the Miracle, and I implore the Royal Soul which inhabits the body of this Elephant to allow me to retain the proofs!"

Upon a sign from the Princess the Scribes were sent for. They came and unrolled before me a long scroll of white satin, and gave me a pencil dipped in gold ink.

The Englishman, with a singular grimace, put a morsel of glass in front of one of his eyes, and became observant.

Secure now of myself, not permitting myself to be embarrassed by the scrutiny of the company, I clasped the pencil firmly with the tip of

my trunk, and slowly, and with deliberation, I wrote very neatly the Alphabet, from beginning to end.

"Iravata!—my faithful friend!" said the Princess, *"I knew that you were more than our equal!"* . . .

Then, with her lovely white arms she clasped my ugly trunk, and leaned her cheek against my rough skin. I felt her tears falling upon me, and trembling myself with emotion, I knelt down and wept, too.

"Very curious! . . . Very curious!" murmured the Englishman, who seemed much excited, and continually let fall and replaced the bit of glass in the corner of his eye.

"What have you to say, Milord? You, who are one of the most learned men in England?" inquired the Princess, drying my eyes with the corner of her gauze scarf.

The philosopher recovered his composure.

"Quintus Mucius, who was three times Consul, relates that he saw an elephant draw in Greek characters this sentence. *"It is I who have*

written these words, and have dedicated the Celtic Spoils." And *Elien* mentions an elephant who was able to write entire phrases, and even talk. I was formerly unable to credit these statements. But it is evident that, such things being possible, we must bow to the authority of the Ancients, our predecessors, and apologize for having doubted their word."

My Princess decided that the Schoolmaster should now be attached to my person, and entrusted with the responsibility of teaching me to write syllables, and words (should that prove possible).

The good man performed his task with reverence, and with a patience worthy of a saint.

For my part, I made such struggles to learn that I grew thin in a way to cause anxiety to those who loved me, and my skin at last floated about my bones, like a mantle that is too large. But when they spoke of interrupting my lessons I uttered such shrieks of despair that it was not to be thought of.

I was compelled, however, to regulate my

hours of study, and above all not to omit my meals, which had often happened in the fever of learning which had taken hold of me.

At last I was rewarded for my diligence. I was able at length to write the beloved name of my Princess! It is true it was instantly blotted out by the tears with which I deluged the paper!

From this moment it seemed as if veils had been removed from my understanding. I made rapid progress, and with the greatest ease. So much so, that my Professor was not considered to be sufficiently learned for his position, and a celebrated Brahman was called upon to complete my education.

I learned that all Golconda thought of nothing but me. And it was expected that, when I should become proficient in writing, wonderful revelations would be made by me, concerning the successive migrations of the Royal Soul which at present inhabited my person.

But what I have written has been simply the Story of my Life, portions of which my dear Mistress was unacquainted with.

The work was at once translated from the Hindustani, in which I had written it, into all the languages of Asia and Europe, and sold by hundreds of thousands.

This honour (which has excited much envy in the minds of authors whose works were not so successful), did not inspire me with vanity.

My reward—my recompense—was *Her* joy, and *Her* pride: the rest of the world was of no account to me; for all that I had achieved was solely and exclusively for *Her*.

CHAPTER II

THE NATIVE FOREST

I WAS born in the forest of Laos, and regarding my youth I have retained only very confused memories; occasional punishments inflicted by my Mother, when I refused to take my bath, or to follow her in search of food; some gay frolics with elephants of my own age; excessive fear during the great storms; pillage of the enemy's fields—and long beatitudes on the borders of streams, and in the silent glades of the forest. That is all. For in those days the mists rested on my mind, which later on were cleared away.

When I grew large I perceived with surprise that the Elders of the Herd of which I was a member regarded me with disfavour. This pained me, and I would have been glad to think that I was mistaken; but it was evident that no matter what advances were made by me, I was avoided by all. I sought for some cause for this

aversion, and soon discovered it by observing my reflection in a pool. *I was not like the others!*

My skin instead of being like theirs, gray and dingy, was white, and in spots of a pinkish colour. . . . How did that happen? Mortification overwhelmed me. And I formed the habit of retiring from the Herd which despised me, and of remaining by myself.

One day when I was thus alone, sad and humiliated, at a distance from the Herd, I noticed a slight noise in the thicket, near me. I parted the branches with my trunk, and saw a singular being, who walked on two legs—and yet was not a bird. He wore neither feathers nor fur; but on his skin there shone brilliant stones, and bits of bright colours that made him look like a flower! *I beheld for the first time a Man.*

An extreme terror seized me; but a curiosity equally intense kept me motionless in the presence of this creature—so small that without the slightest effort I could have crushed him, and who yet in some way appeared to me more formidable and powerful than I.

While I was gazing at him he saw me, and instantly threw himself on the ground, making extraordinary motions, of which I did not comprehend the meaning, but which did not seem to me to be hostile.

After a few moments he rose and retired, bowing at every step, till I lost sight of him.

I returned next day to the same spot, in the hope of seeing him again; the man was there, but this time he was not alone. On seeing me his companions, like himself, performed the same singular movements, throwing themselves on their faces upon the ground, and doubling their bodies backwards and forwards.

My astonishment was great, and my fears diminished. I thought the men so pretty, so light and graceful in their motions, that I could not tire of watching them.

After a while they went away, and I saw them no more.

One day soon after, when alone as usual I descended to the Lake to drink, I saw upon the opposite shore an elephant who looked over at

me and made friendly signals. It flattered me that he did not seem to feel repelled by my appearance, but on the contrary seemed to admire me, and was disposed to make my acquaintance. But he was a stranger to me, and certainly did not belong to our Herd.

He gathered some delicate roots, of a kind that we elephants greatly enjoy, and held them out to me, as though to offer them for my acceptance. I hesitated no longer, but began to swim across the Lake.

On reaching the other side I gave the polite stranger to understand that I was attracted, not so much by the sight of the delicacies as by the wish to enjoy his company. He insisted upon my accepting a portion of his hospitality, and began, very sociably, to eat up the rest.

Then, after some gambols, which seemed to me very graceful, he moved off, inviting me by his looks to follow. I did not need urging, and we plunged into the Forest, running, frolicking, pulling fruits and flowers. I was so delighted with the companionship of my new friend that

I took no notice of the direction in which he was leading me. But suddenly I stopped. I saw with uneasiness that I was quite lost. We had come out onto a plain that was strange to me, and where, in the distance, singular objects showed against the sky—tall points the colour of snow, and brilliant red mounds, and smoke . . . things that seemed to me not natural!

Seeing my hesitation, my companion gave me a friendly blow with his trunk, of sufficient force, however, to show more than ordinary strength.

My suspicions were not allayed by this blow, under which my flank smarted; I refused to go further.

The stranger then uttered a long call, which was answered by similar calls. Seriously frightened now, I turned abruptly towards the Forest. A dozen elephants barred the way.

He who had so duped me (for what reason I could not imagine), fearing the effects of my indignation, now promptly retired. He set off running; but I was so much larger than he that it

seemed easy to overtake him. I rushed in pursuit, but just as I caught up with him I was obliged to stop short. He had entered the open door of a formidable stockade, made of the trunks of giant trees. It was *inside* that he wished to lead me, *to make me a prisoner!*

I tried to draw back and escape, but I was surrounded by the accomplices of my false friend, who beat me cruelly with their trunks, and at last forced me into the enclosure—the door being at once shut behind me.

Seeing myself caught, I uttered my war-cry, and charged the palisades, throwing all my weight against them, in the hope of breaking through. I ran madly round the enclosure, thrusting my tusks into the walls, and seizing the timbers with my trunk, endeavouring to wrench them apart. It was against the door that I strove most furiously. . . . But all was useless. My enemies had prudently disappeared; they did not return till I was exhausted, paralyzed by my impotent rage, and until, motionless, and with drooping head, I owned myself *vanquished!*

Then he who had lured me into this *trap* reappeared and approached me, dragging enormous chains, which he wound around my feet. Groaning deeply, I reproached him with his perfidy; but he gave me to understand that I was in no danger, and that if I would be submissive I would have no cause to regret my lost liberty.

The night came. I was left alone, chained in this manner. I strove with desperation to break my manacles, but without success.

At last, worn out with grief and fatigue, I threw myself on the ground, and after a time fell asleep.

CHAPTER III

THE TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION

WHEN I opened my eyes the sun was up, and I saw, all standing around the stockade, the elephants of the day before—but out of my reach!

They were fastened by the foot, by means of a rope which they could have broken without the slightest effort. They were eating with great relish the fine roots and grasses piled up in front of them.

I was too sad and mortified to feel hungry, and I looked gloomily at these prisoners, whose happiness and contentment I could not understand.

After they had finished eating some men arrived, and far from showing fear, they saluted them by flapping their ears—giving every sign of joy. Each man seemed to be welcomed by one special elephant to whom he gave his sole attention. He loosened the rope from the foot, and

rubbed the rough skin with an ointment, and then, upon a signal, the captive bent back one of his fore-legs to enable the man to mount upon his colossal back. I looked at all this with such astonishment that I almost for the moment forgot my own sufferings.

And now, each man being seated upon the neck of an elephant, they, one after another, fell into line and marched out of the enclosure, and the gate was shut behind them.

I was alone; abandoned. The day was long and cruel. The sun scorched me, and hunger and thirst began to cause me suffering.

I struggled no more. My legs were lacerated by the vain efforts I had made. I was prostrate —hopeless!—and considered myself as one already dead! . . .

At sunset the elephants returned, each one bearing a ration of food; and again I saw them eat joyously, while hunger gnawed my stomach and no one noticed me.

The night again descended. I could no longer suppress my screams, which were more of misery

than of rage. Hunger and thirst prevented me from sleeping, even for a moment.

In the morning a man came towards me. He stopped at some distance, and began to speak to me. I could not, of course, understand what he said to me, but his voice was gentle, and he did not appear to threaten me.

When he had finished speaking he uncovered a bowl that he carried filled with some unfamiliar food, the appetizing odour of which made me fairly quiver!

Then he came near, and kneeling, held out the bowl to me.

I was so famished that I forgot all pride, and even all prudence (for what was offered me might have been poisoned)! At any rate, I never had tasted anything so delicious; and when the basin was empty I carefully picked up the smallest crumbs that had fallen on the ground.

The elephant who had captured me now drew near, bearing a man on his back; he made me understand by little slaps of his trunk that I should bend back one of my fore-legs to allow

the man who had fed me to get upon my neck. I obeyed, resigned to anything, and the man sprang up very lightly and placed himself near my head. Then he pricked me with an iron—but very gently—just to let me know that he was armed, and that he could hurt me terribly at this point, so sensitive with us, at the least sign of rebellion.

Sufficiently warned, I allowed myself to show no impatience. Then they removed my manacles; the other elephant took up the march, and I followed quietly.

We left the stockade, and they led me to a pool in which I was permitted to bathe and drink. After the privations I had suffered the bath seemed so delightful that I could not make up my mind to leave it when the time came; but a prick on the ear told me plainly that I must obey, and I was so afraid of being again deprived of food and drink that I rushed out of the water, determined to do all I was bid.

We now went towards the strange objects that I had seen in the distance on the plain, on the

day I was made prisoner. I learned later that it was the city of Bangok, the capital of Siam. I had never yet beheld a city, and my curiosity was so aroused that I was anxious to reach it. As we drew near men appeared on the sides of the road, more and more numerously, so that the way was crowded. They stood on each side of the pathway, and to my great surprise, I at last discovered that it was *I* whom they were expecting, and had come out to see!

At my approach they uttered shouts of joy; and when I passed before them they threw themselves, face-downward, upon the earth, with extended arms, then rose and followed me.

At the gates of the city a Procession appeared, with cloth of gold, and arms, and streamers of silk on long poles.

All at once there was a noise—so wonderful that I stopped short. One would have said it was composed of shrieks and groans, and claps of thunder, and whistling winds, mingled with the songs of birds! I was so terrified that I turned to escape, but found myself trunk to trunk with

my companion, who was following me. His perfect tranquility, and the roguish wink that he gave me, reassured me, and I felt mortified to have exhibited less courage than others before so many spectators, and I wheeled about so promptly that the man on my head did not have time to prick my ear.

I was ordered to stop in front of the leader of the Procession, who saluted me, and made an address.

The great and fearful noise had ceased, but began again as soon as this personage had finished his speech. The Procession turned around now and preceded me, and we again moved on. I then saw that it was men who were *making* all this noise. They struck various objects—they tapped them—they whistled into them—and seemed to take the greatest trouble! That which they made was called "*Music*." I grew used to it in time, and even came to think it agreeable. I was no longer afraid, and all that I saw interested me, and delighted me greatly.

In the city the crowds were even denser, and

the rejoicings more noisy. They spread carpets on the route I was to traverse; the houses were wreathed with garlands of flowers, and from the windows they threw phials of perfume, which my rider caught, flying, and sprinkled over me.

Why were they so glad to see me? Why were all these honours showered upon me? I, who in my own Herd had been repulsed and disdained. . . .

I could find no reply at the time, but later on I learned that it was the whiteness of my skin which alone was responsible for all this enthusiasm. That which seemed to elephants a defect, seemed admirable to men, and made me more valuable than a treasure.

They believed my presence was a sign of Happiness—of Victory—of Prosperity to the Kingdom—and they treated me accordingly.

We had now reached a great square in front of a magnificent building which might well cause amazement to a "wild" elephant. Often since then I have seen this Palace, and with better understanding, but always with the same aston-

ishment and admiration. It was like a mountain of snow, carved into domes and great stairways, with painted statues, and columns encrusted with jewels, and tipped with globes of crystal that dazzled the eyes. The tall golden points rose higher than the domes, and in many places red standards floated, and on all of them there was the figure of a *White Elephant!*

All the Court, in costume of ceremony was assembled on the lower steps of the stairway. Above, on the platform, on either side of a doorway of red and gold, elephants covered with superb housings were ranged—eight to the right, eight to the left, all standing motionless.

They summoned me to the foot of the stair, and there I was told to stop. A great silence fell upon all. One would have said that there was nobody there. The crowd which had been so noisy now was mute.

The red and gold doorway was opened wide, and all the people prostrated themselves, resting their foreheads upon the earth.

The King of Siam appeared.

He was borne by four porters in a pavilion of gold, in which he sat with crossed legs. His robe was covered with jewels, and scattered blinding rays. Before him walked young boys dressed in crimson, who waved great bunches of feathers attached to long sticks; others carried silver basins out of which came clouds of perfumed smoke.

I am able to describe all this now, with words which I have learned since then; but at that time I admired without understanding, and I felt as if I was looking upon all the *Stars of Heaven*, and the *Sun at Noonday*, and all the *Flowers of the loveliest Spring*—at one and the same time! . . .

The bearers of the King descended the steps in front of me. His Majesty approached. Then my conductor pricked my ear, and my companion struck my leg with his trunk, indicating that I was to kneel.

I did so voluntarily, in the presence of such splendour, which seemed to me as if it might burn any one who should touch it!

The King inclined his head slightly. . . .

THE KING OF SIAM HAD SALUTED ME!

(I learned afterwards that I was the only one who had ever been honoured in such fashion. And I was soon able to return the King's salute, or rather to anticipate it.)

His Majesty addressed me with a few words which had an agreeable sound. He bestowed on me the name of "*King-Magnanimous*" with the rank of *Mandarin of the First Class*. He placed upon my head a chaplet of pearls set with gold and precious stones, and then retired to his Palace.

The multitude, who until now had remained prostrated, now rose up, and with shouts and cries of joy, accompanied me to my own palace, where I was to dwell.

It was in a garden, in the midst of an immense lawn. The walls were of sandal wood, and the great roofs extended far out on all sides; they were lacquered in red and glistened in the sunlight, with here and there globes of copper, and carved likenesses of elephants' heads.

I was taken into an immense Hall, so high that

the red rafters which interlaced overhead and supported the roof made me think of the branches of my native Forest, when the sunset reddens them.

An old elephant was walking slowly about the Hall. As soon as he saw me he advanced towards me, flapping his ears in welcome. His tusks were ornamented with rings and golden bells, and he wore on his head a diadem like that which the King had just placed on mine. But all this did not improve his appearance. His skin was mottled with dingy patches, like dried earth, and cracked in spots; his eyes and ears were encircled with rednesses; his tusks were yellow and broken, and he walked with difficulty. But he seemed amiable, and I returned his courtesies.

My conductor descended from my neck, while officers and servants prostrated themselves before me as they had done before the King himself.

Then they led me to a huge table of marble, where in great bowls and vessels of silver and

gold were bananas, sugar-canes, all sorts of delicious fruits, and choice grasses—and cakes—and rice—and melted butter. . . . *What a feast!*

Ah! how I wished that those of my Herd who had made a mock of me could see how I was treated by *Men!*

My heart swelled with pride, and I no longer regretted my liberty and my native Forest.

CHAPTER IV

ROYAL ELEPHANT OF SIAM

PRINCE-FORMIDABLE, for such was the name of my ancient companion, reclining not far from me upon a bed of fragrant branches, now told me something of his history, and also instructed me as to my duties of Royal Elephant.

"I have been here rather more than one hundred years," said he. "I am very old, and I am sick, in spite of the white monkeys that you see frisking about up there in the rafters. They are kept here to preserve us from evil diseases; but all those who were here with me in this palace died within a few days of each other, of some ailment which they seemed to take from each other, and I, the oldest of all of them, am the only survivor.

"For several years I have been alone—the only White Elephant—and the greatest anxiety has been felt in Court Circles on this account.

No others could be discovered, notwithstanding the incessant hunts which were made throughout the forests. It was thought that great misfortunes menaced the Kingdom, and your arrival has caused rejoicings throughout the country."

"Why is it that they consider us so important?" asked I. "What is there extraordinary about us? Among elephants they seem rather to despise us!"

"I understand," said Prince-Formidable, "that men, when they die are transformed into animals; the noblest into elephants, and Kings into White Elephants. We are therefore ancient Kings; though, for my part, I have no recollection of having been either a man or a King."

"Nor I either," said I. "I don't remember anything at all! But is it then on account of envy that the gray elephants dislike us?"

"No," said Prince-Formidable. "Those of us who have not lived among men are mere brutes, and don't know anything. They think the colour of our skin results from disease, and so consider us inferior to themselves; while on the contrary

it is really a sign of Royalty. . . . You see what poor ignorant creatures they are!"

I admired the wisdom and experience of my new friend, who had lived so long and seen so much. I never tired of asking him questions, and he replied with an inexhaustible good nature.

To-day I am able to translate in words what he was obliged to tell me in the very limited language of elephants. Over and over he had to begin again and repeat; but he was never impatient, although he was himself so superior, and had long understood the language of men.

"Attention!" said he to me, upon hearing the sound of distant music. "Here are the *Talapoins*, who are coming to give you their benediction."

He tried to make me understand who they were, but although I pretended out of politeness to do so, I had not in reality the least idea of what was meant, except that it was some new honour that was to be conferred upon me.

The *Talapoins* had shaven heads, and their ears stood out, and they wore long yellow gowns with big sleeves.

On entering they did not prostrate themselves —and I confess this shocked me somewhat! The oldest marched in the centre. He stopped before me, and began talking in a queer voice, very high and unpleasant; then, without stopping his remarks, he took from the hand of one of his followers a mop with an ivory handle, while another one held a basin of water, in which he dipped the mop, and commenced to sprinkle me in a way that displeased me exceedingly. He squirted the water in my eyes and ears, and as it lasted longer than I thought needful, I seized the mop out of his hand, and sousing it well in the water I shook it over all three of them—giving as good as I had received!

They escaped, laughing and wiping their faces with their long sleeves, and I gave a loud scream of triumph, to proclaim my victory, and my satisfaction! . . . But Prince-Formidable did not approve my conduct—he thought it lacked dignity.

Soon after this they came to take us to the bath. A slave marched in front, striking cymbals

in order to make way for us, and others held over our heads magnificent umbrellas. It was in our own park that the beautiful pond was situated, and I was allowed this time to plunge and swim, and roll over as long as I wanted.

A repast as plentiful as it was delicious ended the day, which had certainly been to me in every way most satisfactory.

It continued in this manner, from day to day, with the exception of the Talapoins, who never returned.

Only one hour in the day was somewhat distressing to me. It was my daily lesson, which I had to take each evening, before going to bed.

The man who had first sat upon my head remained my principal guardian—my "Mahout," and he had to teach me, and make me understand the indispensible words of command, such as "Forward," "Backward," "Kneel," "Rise," "Right," "Left," "Halt," "Faster," "Slower," "That's Right," "That's Wrong," "Do It Again," "That's Enough," "*Salute the King.*"

Prince-Formidable assisted me by translating

these orders to me in elephant-speech, so that I soon knew all that was needful.

Several years passed in this way very pleasantly, but rather monotonously. Prince-Formidable died the second year after my arrival. They gave him a Royal Funeral and all the Court went into mourning.

For a while I was alone. Then other White Elephants came in; but the new ones were very ignorant, and seemed sulky and rebellious in their dispositions—so that I took but little notice of them.

CHAPTER V.

THE DOWRY OF THE PRINCESS

ONE day my Mahout, who like all others of his class, had the habit of making long discourses (which I finally grew to understand), came and stood before me, as he always did when he wished me to listen.

I at once became attentive, for I saw from his agitated air that something of importance was concerned.

"King-Magnanimous," said he, "ought we to rejoice—or ought we to weep? Is a new life for us a good, or an evil thing? Should one dread change, or should one welcome it? These are questions which are being balanced in my mind, like the weights in a pair of scales! You, who are now an elephant, but were once a King could tell me, if only you could speak. You could tell me if the numerous transformations, the changes, have brought you most joy or sorrow. Your wis-

dom could put an end to my anxiety, perhaps; but perhaps, on the other hand, you can look no further into the future than I; and you would say to me, "*Let us resign ourselves to what we cannot help, and wait to either weep or rejoice, till events prove good or ill.*" . . . Well! so will we do. We will resign ourselves, and wait.

"That which is about to happen you know not —and that is what I am going to tell you.

"Our great King, *Phra, Puttie, Chucka, Ka, Rap, Si, Klan, Si, Kla, Mom, Ka, Phra, Puttie, Chow* (for I cannot mention the King's name without giving him all his titles—I who am only a simple Mahout—when the Prime Minister, himself durst not do so!)—our great King is the father of several Princes, and also of a Princess—a beautiful Princess—who is of a marriageable age. . . . *Well! that is it!* She is about to be married. The King *Phra, Puttie, Chucka* has bestowed the hand of the Princess Saphire-of-Heaven upon a Hindu, the Prince of Golconda: and this marriage, which at first would seem of

little interest to us, is going to overturn our whole existence.

"Know, King-Magnanimous, that your glorious person is to form part of the Dowry of the Princess. Yes! even so. Without asking your pleasure in this affair, they have made a gift of you to a stranger Prince, who may not have for your Majesty the respect due you.

"And I—poor Mahout—what am I without the noble elephant whom I attend? And what is your Majesty without me?

"Therefore they have also made a gift of me, and I am now a fragment of the royal dowry. We are bound to each other till death—we are but one! You go where I conduct you, and I must go where you go. Oh! King-Magnanimous, *ought we to weep or rejoice?*"

Really, I could not say. And I was greatly disturbed at what had been told me.

To leave this life, so sweet and tranquil, but which sometimes wearied me by its monotony and inaction . . . Abandon this beautiful home so abundantly provided with good things! . . .

Surely this was cause for weeping! But then, to see new countries, new cities, meet with new adventures—that was perhaps something to rejoice at! . . .

Like my Mahout, I concluded the best way was to wait—and for the present to be resigned.

CHAPTER VI

THE DEPARTURE

THE day of our departure arrived, and very early in the morning the Slaves came to make my toilet. They rubbed me all over several times with a pomade perfumed with magnolia and santal; they placed on my back a mantle of purple and gold, and upon my head a chaplet of pearls and the royal diadem. They fastened heavy gold bracelets on my legs, and on my tusks gold rings set with jewels; from each of my ears there hung down a great tail of horse-hair, white and silky. Arrayed thus, I was conscious of my magnificence, and longed to show myself to the People.

Still, I gave a backward glance at the Palace I was leaving, and sounded a few notes of farewell to the elephants who were remaining, with whom I had begun to be quite friendly. They replied by thundering outbursts of trumpeting,

the noise of which followed me for a long way. All the inhabitants of Bangok were out, as on the day of my triumphal entry. They were in holiday costume, and were moving towards the palace of the King. There a splendid procession was formed and began its march, preceded by one hundred musicians dressed in green and crimson.

The King was seated in a howdah of gold fillagree, on a colossal black elephant—a giant among elephants. On his right and on his left were the Prince and Princess, on mounts of more than ordinary size.

The howdah of the Bride was enclosed by a fringe of jewels which rendered her invisible. The Prince was young and handsome; he had a charming expression, which at once inspired me with confidence.

I followed next after the King, conducted by my Mahout, who walked on foot beside me. And after me came the Mandarins, Ministers, and other high functionaries, according to rank, and mounted on elephants or horses, followed by their servants, who carried behind each noble

lord the Tea-pot of Honour, which in Siam is an insignia of nobility, the greater or less richness of which indicates the importance of the owner.

Then came the baggage of the Princess, consisting of numberless boxes of teak wood, marvelously carved.

The ceremony of the marriage had already taken place, and had occupied eight days. This was the "farewell" of the King, the Princes and the people to their Princess, whom they were escorting to the shore, whence she was to depart.

We stopped on the way at the richest Pagoda in the city, where they worship a Buddha carved out of a single emerald, which has not its equal in the world, for it is three feet tall, and as thick as the body of a man.

After this we descended by narrow streets, traversed by bridges and canals to the shores of the river—the broad and beautiful Mei-nam.

In the distance were seen the deep blue mountains against the brilliant sky—the chain of *"The-Hundred-Peaks"*—the *"Rameau-Sabad"*

—the "*Hill-of-Precious-Stones*," and others. But the spectacle of the river, all covered with shipping bearing flags, and decorated with flowers, was incomparable!

There were great Junks of red and gold, with their sails of matting spread out like fans, their masts carrying pennants, and their prows rounded and made to imitate the head of a gigantic fish with goggle eyes; all sorts of boats, sampans, and rafts, supporting tents of silk which looked like floating summer-houses! All laden to the water's edge with a gay and noisy crowd, and with bands of music and singers, who played and sang by turns.

Salvos of artillery, louder than thunder, burst forth when the King appeared, and the people gave such a deafening shout that I should have died of fright, had I not learned by this time to permit nothing to startle me.

The vessel which was to convey us to India lay at the wharf with steam up, and splendidly decorated.

It was here we were to part.

The King and the Bride and Groom descended from their elephants. The Mandarins formed a circle; and all the people kept silence.

Then the King, "*Sacred Master of Heads, Sacred Master of Lives, Possessor of Everything, Lord of the White Elephants, Infallible, and All-Powerful,*" made a speech, while chewing Betel, which stained his mouth crimson, and obliged him to spit frequently into a silver basin, which was held by a slave.

The Prince, kneeling before his royal father-in-law, also made a speech, less long—chewing nothing! The Bride wept behind her veils.

When it was time to embark there was some confusion on account of the Princess's innumerable boxes of teak wood, and because of the horses, whom my presence terrified greatly. A long whistle was heard; the musicians played; the cannon boomed; a swaying movement made me feel dizzy—and the shore receded.

All the boats followed us at first with oars and sails, but were soon left behind. The King stood on the wharf as long as he could see us. I

was deeply moved at leaving this city, where I had at first suffered so severely, but where my existence afterwards had been so happy and glorious.

My Mahout, leaning against me, we both looked back. At a turn of the river all disappeared; our eyes met, and both were full of tears.

"King-Magnanimous," said he, after a moment of silence, "let us wait before we either weep or rejoice. Let us see what Fate has in store for us!"

Soon the river grew so broad that the banks could no longer be seen. The water began to move in a singular manner, and the ship also, causing me most unpleasant sensations. Little by little we put out to sea. . . . Then it was horrible! My head spun round; my legs failed me; an atrocious misery twisted me in the stomach. . . . I was shamefully sick, and thought a thousand times that I was dying! I can, therefore, say nothing of this voyage, which is the most distressing memory of my life.

Never, never would I go again to sea—except it might be to serve *Her*. But for any other reason I would massacre whoever should compel me to put foot on a boat! . . .

CHAPTER VII

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

THE Rajah of Golconda, my new master, was called *Alemguir*, which signifies, "The Light of the World."

He certainly did not show me the respect to which I was accustomed; he did not prostrate himself, nor even salute me; but he did better than either—he loved me.

From the first he spoke kind words to me, not in my quality of "White Elephant," which is a distinction much less thought of in India than in Siam, but because he found me intelligent, good-tempered, and obedient—more so than any of his other elephants. He remembered me and came to see me every day, and saw to it that I was not allowed to lack anything.

He had changed my name from "*King-Magnanimous*" to "*Iravata*," which is the name of the elephant who bears the God Indra. The title

was certainly sufficiently honourable, and I was easily consoled for being no longer worshipped as an idol by the pleasure of being treated as a friend.

Alemguir would have preferred that his Queen, Saphire-of-Heaven should always use me as her mount; but she never would consent to install herself on my back. . . . "It would be a sacrilege!" said she, "*and a grave offence to one of my Ancestors!*"

She was persuaded that I was one of her forefathers, undergoing a transformation for the time being.

Her husband rallied her good-naturedly upon the subject, but she would not yield.

So he gave her a black elephant, and kept me for his own service.

I was proud to carry my Prince in promenades, in festivals, and in Tiger hunting, which he taught me.

My life was much less indolent than in Siam, and much more varied and interesting. My Mahout, in spite of the trouble that this stirring ex-

istence imposed upon him also found it pleasanter than the monotony of the old life—and as usual he confided his sentiments to me!

I was also instructed in the art of war, for during the year following the marriage of Alemguir with Saphire-of-Heaven grave anxieties came to darken the happiness of the young married couple.

A powerful neighbour, the Maharajah of Mysore sought without ceasing to fasten a quarrel upon the Prince of Golconda, concerning certain questions of boundaries.

Alemguir did all in his power to avoid hostilities, but the ill-will of his opponent was evident, and in spite of the conciliatory efforts of the ambassadors, a war seemed imminent. The Princess wrote to her father, the King of Siam, who sent cannon, and a few soldiers; but the enemy was formidable, and the apprehensions of all increased from hour to hour.

One day the Ambassadors returned in dismay; diplomacy had failed, negotiations were at an end, and the Maharajah of Mysore declared war.

The necessary preparations were made in haste; and one morning I was invested with my armour. A sheathing of horn covered me and descended below my knees; on my head was a helmet of metal, with a visor of iron, perforated with holes for the eyes, and a point projected from the middle of the forehead. My crupper and flanks were defended by flexible armour, as was my trunk, which had a ridge running down the centre armed with pointed teeth of metal; and upon my tusks were steel casings, sharp and cutting, which lengthened them greatly and made of them terrific weapons.

Thus accoutred, my Mahout, who was also in armour, and weighed more heavily than usual upon my neck, guided me to the portico of the Palace overlooking the great Courtyard, where were assembled all the chiefs of the army. Prince Alemguir appeared at the entrance, and the officers saluted him by clashing their arms.

He was magnificent in his warlike array. He wore a tunic of gold-linked armour, under a light breastplate studded with diamonds; he carried

a round shield that blazed with jewels, and his helmet was gold with a diamond crest.

Standing upon the upper steps of the portico he harangued his troops; but as I did not then understand Hindustani I do not know what he said.

When he was about to mount, the Princess Saphire-of-Heaven rushed out of the Palace, followed by all her women, and threw herself, sobbing into the arms of her husband.

"Alas!" cried she, "what will become of me, separated from you? How shall I endure the continual anguish of knowing you exposed to wounds and death? The heir which we hoped would be born in joy and festivity, now will enter life amid tears and despair! Perhaps he will be born an orphan—for if the father is killed, the mother will not survive!"

I listened to this and felt my heart ache under my coat of horn.

The Prince, much affected, could hardly restrain his tears. He made an effort, however, to master his emotion, and replied with calmness.

"Every man," said he, "owes his life to his Country; and the Prince more than any other man. Our honour, and the welfare of our people are more dear to us than our own happiness. We must set an example of courage and self-sacrifice, instead of allowing ourselves to be softened by tears.

"If the war proves cruel to me—and I die—you, my beloved Wife, will live to bring up our Child; and hereafter we shall find each other, and be forever happy in the life to come!"

He gently disengaged the clasp of her delicate arms. The veil of the Princess caught on the breastplate of the Prince and was torn. The Prince gathered a fragment, and kept it as a talisman.

And now Alemguir was in the howdah, and it was to me that the Princess appealed, with breathless sobs.

"Iravata, thou who art strong, and who lovest thy Master, and who ought to love me, for thou hast the soul of one of my Ancestors. . . . Guard the Prince! Protect him, and bring him

back to me living—for if he comes not back I shall die!"

Speaking these words the Princess became as pale as snow, and fell fainting into the arms of her servants.

I made a resolve in my heart to defend my Master with all my might, and not to fail in risking my life for the safety of his.

Taking advantage of the swoon of the Princess, which made her unconscious, Alemguir gave the signal to depart.

We left the Palace, and then the City, to join the main army, which was encamped outside on the plains.

The Artillery and the Elephants were placed in the centre; the Horsemen on the right and left, and the foot-soldiers in front and at the rear.

The trumpets sounded a warlike march; the drums beat; the whole army gave a shout—and we marched on the enemy.

CHAPTER VIII

BATTLE

WHAT a fearful thing is a battle! How terrible—how grand! It intoxicates, and stuns you. The music, the roar of the cannon, the firing, the shouts of the combatants; the tumult, the smoke, the dust—excite in you a strange madness, which makes you hate the creatures which you can scarcely see—whom you have never known, and who, for no other reason, are filled with the same murderous rage towards you!

At first I, who had never killed anything but tigers, shuddered at the thought of shedding human blood. I hesitated—I avoided giving blows. But suddenly I saw my Master in danger; a horseman was aiming at him at close range. He had not time to fire—my armed tusks disappeared in the belly of the horse, which I lifted high up in the air, and whose bleeding carcass I tossed, with its rider, into the ranks of the enemy.

From that moment it was carnage where I went. I pierced. I cut. I disembowelled all before me—making corpses of the living, and crushing to pulp the dead under my great feet, which soon were shod with blood.

The Prince encouraged me by his voice, and pushed constantly forward. His gun, which a soldier behind him reloaded as fast as it was discharged, was never silent, and his aim was so sure that he never missed. The Enemy's ranks crumbled before us. And Alemguir, full of ardour urged me on and on! He desired to reach the Maharajah of Mysore, who in the centre of his army directed the battle.

At last he found him, shouted defiance at him, and defied him to meet him in single combat.

The Maharajah smiled scornfully and did not answer.

All at once my Mahout, who, being occupied with guiding me, and less carried away by the fury of the battle, had a better opportunity of observing the situation, cried out in a voice of horror, "*Back!—Back!—or you are lost!*"

But the Prince continued to shout "*Forward!*" And my Mahout could jab my ear as much as he chose—I refused to obey!

"Prince! Prince! You are lost!" groaned the unhappy slave. "The army of Golconda is in retreat, and we are surrounded! It is too late to escape!"

A ball struck him. With a groan he rolled off my neck, clinging an instant, deluging me with blood, then he fell.

Dead. He was dead!

I stopped, horrified; turning the body gently over with the tip of my trunk—he did not move; he did not breathe; it was the end.

My poor Mahout had breathed his last so quickly—almost without pain. This then, was what "*Fate*" had in store for *him!*

I could see him off there, at Bangok, saying so gravely to me, "Ought we to rejoice, or weep?" Alas! he was dead; he could neither weep or rejoice any more! . . .

But around me were shouts of triumph. My Master still fought.

"Take him alive!" cried the Maharajah from his elephant. "He shall die by the hand of the executioner!"

I tried to rush forward but my feet were entangled in running knots which they had thrown around me, and my furious efforts only drew them tighter.

All was ended. I was taken; and my Master with me.

Poor Princess Saphire-of-Heaven! In her desolate Palace she was suffering a thousand times more from fear and anxiety than we from our misfortune. For her also it was *Fate!*

I could hear her sweet voice entreating me to bring back to her her beloved husband; and behold! we were vanquished—prisoners—and the Prince, loaded with chains, was now listening to the sentence that condemned him to die a shameful death at dawn on the morrow!

I was of value. *I* made part of the "*spoils.*" And they had no intention of killing *me.* But I had been so terrible in battle that they dared not come near me.

I set to thinking with all the powers of my poor, feeble mind. It seemed as if I had best pretend to submit. I began to feel the smart of my wounds, and the fatigue of the combat; and my heavy armour weighed on me painfully.

I began to utter plaintive moans—as if imploring assistance from those standing about.

One of them, seeing me so quiet, ventured to approach. I redoubled my moans, making them very soft.

"He must be hurt," said the man. "We must look after him, and take care of him, for he is an animal of great price!"

All drew near. They took off my armour, I helping them as well as I could. When it was off I sank on the ground, as if exhausted.

I had received a great many wounds, but only one was of any consequence; it was near the shoulder.

They brought a doctor who dressed my wounds. Meanwhile, I thought of my Master, who, perhaps, was also wounded, but who was receiving no care!

I had not failed to watch him, out of the corner of my eye, without seeming to do so, while I was performing my little comedy!

I saw that they had chained him to a stake, and that soldiers with arms in their hands guarded him.

Grief tore my heart: and the groans that I gave were most sincere—but it was not my wounds that caused them!

However, I feigned an indifference to my Master. I appeared to give no thought to anything but myself. And I took pains to be so grateful to the surgeon for his services that he was quite touched, and ordered them to take off the running knots which were murdering my legs.

"*This elephant is remarkably gentle*," said he, "*Give him some food* and drink, for he seems very tired and feeble—no doubt from the blood he has lost!"

He went off to attend others; and presently they brought me a good ration of forage; vegetables, and rice, and fresh water in a great vessel.

I thought of Prince Alemguir, who was perhaps also suffering from thirst—and my throat grew tight! . . .

However, we are slaves to our enormous appetite; hunger soon subdues and enfeebles us. I must eat, in order to be strong, and ready for whatever was to come.

I gave myself the airs of an invalid, disinclined for food, and did not raise myself up from the ground.

So, giving no more thought to me, they put a light rope on my foot and fastened it to a peg, and left me.

CHAPTER IX

THE ESCAPE

NIGHT came; fires dotted with their red flames the entire extent of the camp; the smoke mounted straight in the tranquil air; I saw around the camp-kettles the men crouching, their forms showing dark against the light; then there were dances, songs, and music. They were celebrating the victory by drinking, shouting and quarrelling; they even acted over again their hand-to-hand struggles, which grew so furious that blood flowed.

Then, little by little, silence fell; all was dark; a heavy sleep weighed upon the evening of the battle!

Then I rose up on my feet.

There was no moon, only the great stars palpitated in the sky. I listened; I peered into the obscurity. The tents formed little dark hillocks, undulating away, as far as the eye could reach.

No sound, but the intermittent call of distant sentinels, who could not be seen. Before the tent where my Master was imprisoned two soldiers in white tunics marched slowly with guns on their shoulders. I could see clearly their long white robes, and their muslin turbans. Sometimes the barrel of their gun sparkled, reflecting the ray of a star.

Kill these two men? Deliver my Master? and escape with him? Would such a thing be possible? . . .

The sentinels marched slowly around the prisoner's tent, walking in opposite directions from each other, so that all sides of the tent were constantly under observation.

How to seize them without their being able to give the alarm? . . . Standing motionless in the darkness, I followed them with my eyes, striving to understand their movements, and the different positions they occupied while coming and going.

I observed that one soldier in crossing his companion turned his back to me, and then disap-

peared behind the tent, and at the same instant the other soldier also had his back to me, while making the circuit. A short moment only elapsed before the first one would reappear and be facing me.

I could not strike the two guards at one time; and if one saw me attack the other he would have time to give the alarm, and awaken the whole camp.

It was, then, during this one brief moment that I must act.

About twenty paces separated me from the tent, and this was an added difficulty—shortening still more the available time during which I would be unseen; but the attempt must be made.

I tried to undo the rope that tethered my foot. I could not succeed; but with a single jerk I pulled up the stake to which I was attached.

I was free.

Choosing a favourable moment I took some steps towards the tent. Then I waited for the soldiers to make another turn—and moved still nearer. I preserved the attitude of a sleeping

elephant; and they failed to notice in the darkness that I had drawn closer.

Now was the time. I must make the attempt —at the next turn, thought I.

But my heart beat so violently that I was compelled to wait. My one fear was that I might not succeed; then, too, I felt a repugnance to slaying—by treachery as it seemed—these two unknown human beings. But after all, was it not men who had set me the example of ferocity? To save my Master I would have destroyed without remorse the entire army of the enemy!

My self-possession returned; and it was with the greatest coolness that I executed my plan.

The first soldier was seized by my trunk and strangled, with no sound except the cracking of his bones. I had just thrown aside his corpse when the other came face to face with me.

He did not cry out—terror prevented him; but he instinctively jumped backward, and so hastily that he fell. . . . The unfortunate man never rose; my enormous foot falling upon him crushed him to a bloody mass.

I drew a long breath; then I listened; in the distance could still be heard the occasional call of the sentinels who guarded the outskirts of the camp, of which we occupied the centre; no doubt they would soon be relieved—and perhaps also the guards of the Prince; there was not a moment to spare.

Yet I dared not approach my Master suddenly, lest he might utter an exclamation of surprise.

Was he sleeping, the dear Prince, worn out with fatigue? Or was he grieving silently over the loss of his liberty, and his life?

I was at a loss what to do; and the anguish of knowing that the moments were slipping by made my skin creep!

All at once an idea came to me. I pulled up on one side the stakes that held the tent, and taking the canvas by the lower edge, I turned it half-way over, just as a strong wind might have done. There remained nothing between us, and I saw the Prince seated on the ground, his elbow on his knee, his head resting on his hand.

He raised his head quickly, and saw my giant form outlined against the starry sky.

"Iravata! my friend, my companion in misfortune!" murmured he.

Tears came to my eyes; but there was no time for anything of that kind! I touched the chains of my Master, feeling them to judge of their weight. They were nothing for me. With one blow they were broken—first those on the feet, and finally the heavier one, which, attached to a belt of iron, chained the Prince to a gallows.

"What are you doing? How is it that you are free?" said Alemguir, who, by degrees, was recovering from his prostration.

All at once he understood; he sprang to his feet.

"Why! you are liberating me!—You are going to save me!"

I made a sign that it was so, but that we must be quick. Calm and resolute now, he cast off the remnants of his shackles. I showed him the tether on my foot, and the stake that dragged after it. He stooped down and unfastened the

cord; then I helped him to mount up on my neck. . . . Oh! what joy to feel him there again! But we were far from being out of danger.

He spoke no more. He concentrated all his attention upon directing our flight through the darkness.

Coming out of the obscurity of the tent, he could see all the better, and from on high he could look about him, listen to the voices of the sentinels, and ascertain something of the arrangement of the camp, and of its extent, and its nearest limits.

He bent forward, darting his looks in every direction; but it was impossible to pierce the darkness for more than a hundred feet in advance.

Avenues had been formed between the tents, which had been placed in fairly even lines; but these pathways would naturally be guarded, and the Prince judged it would be safer to glide behind the tents in their confused and indistinct shadows.

Notwithstanding our appearance of heaviness, and our massive corpulence, we have the faculty of walking as noiselessly as a cat or a panther. A whole herd of elephants on the march, if they suspect any danger, can avoid snapping a twig, or rustling a leaf. The most acute hearing will fail to detect the sound of their footsteps; and whoever sees them filing past by hundreds would take them for phantoms. It would be quite proper to say "as *light* as an *elephant*"—but I imagine the idea never occurred to any one.

This peculiarity explains how I was enabled to circulate between these thousands of tents, scarcely seeing my way, and obliged very often to pass through an opening barely larger than my own person, without running against, or overturning anything, and without making a noise that would have betrayed us.

We had now reached the limits of the encampment, which were by no means easy to pass, for they had been rapidly fortified, ditches had been dug, and entrenchments thrown up. But the work having been hastily done was not very solid.

The Prince leaned down close to my ear, and said to me:

"Try to break down the earth wall, and turn it into the ditch so as to fill it up."

I understood, and went to work. The ground was still soft and yielded readily; but I could not prevent a dull thud when it fell into the ditch. It was a very feeble smothered sound . . . and yet to me it seemed tremendous!

At last the opening was made. I passed through, plodded across the mud in the bottom of the ditch, and succeeded in climbing up the other side.

We were out of the camp, and I joyfully quickened my pace.

But a cry resounded—a cry of alarm. They had seen us in the open space, which I was crossing now at full speed. . . . "Beware, Master!" I seized him and placed him cross-wise upon my tusks, supporting him with my trunk, and without slackening my pace. My quick ear had detected the sound of loading guns—they were going to fire upon us; but my Prince, protected by

the bulk of my great body would be in no danger.

A sudden light flashed in the darkness; there was a rattling volley of shots, and a shower of bullets struck my crupper. They bounded off, for these little leaden pellets are incapable of penetrating the tough hide of an elephant. They merely stung me like little pricks of red-hot iron.

A second discharge fell short, with the exception of a single ball which grazed my ear, and carried off a small piece.

I ran still faster, hoping to gain the shelter of a thicket which at least would protect us from the bullets.

Just as I reached it I heard the sound of galloping horses.

"We are pursued," said Alemguir. He had resumed his place on my neck. I plunged into the thickest of the woods, making a pathway by the aid of my tusks, crushing the branches under my feet. But this delayed us; it also betrayed our course, and left an open road for our enemies.

There seemed no way of meeting this danger,

and I trembled with an anxiety that for the moment paralyzed me.

My Master, full of courage, spoke soothingly to me.

"Calm yourself," said he, "there is no cause for despair; you know how horses fear you; if they reach us you have only to turn and fall upon them to terrify them, and put them to flight!"

But although I could not say so in words, my thought was, *The shots can reach my Master!*

However, I took courage, and managed to push on still faster. The day, which comes so early in summer, began to break. A dull continuous noise now became audible, and drowned the sound of the horses' hoofs.

"That must be a river," said Alemguir. "If we can but reach it and put it between us and our pursuers, we shall be saved."

I raised my trunk, snuffing the air to discover the direction of the water, and changed my course. The wood now became less dense; I advanced more easily between the young trees and saplings which I crushed under foot; and we soon

found ourselves beside a rapid river which flowed in the depths of a ravine. The water, which boiled in places and ran with a dizzy swiftness, had dug for itself a bed in the clayey soil, and flowed as it were between two walls.

"Alas!" said the Prince; "that which I hoped would be our salvation is going to be our ruin! It will never be possible to descend to the level of this river."

To my mind it was difficult—but not impossible. And as there was no time to waste in reflection, I went to work at once digging the clay with my tusks, stamping it down with my feet, and throwing it right and left, in a way to form a sort of incline; but when I thought I might risk myself upon it the earth crumbled away, and, sliding down the sticky mud, I shot into the water more quickly than I had intended, with a tremendous *splash* that sent the water up into the air to an amazing height. Luckily, my Master had been able to cling to my ear, and was none the worse. So I was soon relieved, though astounded at my sudden descent.

The current now carried us along, and I floated with it. It saved me all exertion, and I reposed deliciously in the cool refreshing water, which restored my strength. The Prince also was invigorated. He leaned over several times to drink out of the hollow of his hand.

Suddenly he turned his head.

"Here come our enemies!" said he.

The horsemen, following the pathway which I had made in the woods, had reached the banks of the river; they saw us, and riding along the borders they started in pursuit of us.

The Prince watched them closely.

"They are taking aim," cried he, "give your *War-cry!*"

I tore up from the bottom of my lungs the most terrible yell in my power! It was a success; and the echoes repeated it as if they would never stop. It did not fail to produce the effect my Master expected. The horses were terrified and reared in disorder, and the shots scattered, without reaching us.

"We know how to defend ourselves for the

present," said Alemguir; "some of the men are unhorsed, and the others have all they can do to control their animals."

Having my back turned, I could see nothing, but was greatly rejoiced at what I heard.

The current continued to carry us on, and there was no way of landing on the other side, which presented only a straight wall, while on the side of our foes the shore was becoming less and less steep.

The soldiers of Mysore, having succeeded in quieting their steeds, now gained rapidly upon us; but it was a peril of another kind that suddenly alarmed me. I felt the water beginning to draw me on with increasing swiftness, as though being attracted towards a gulf. I struggled vigourously against the current, endeavouring to draw backwards, but I could affect but little its course, which had become fearful in its rapidity. The Prince shared my anxiety.

"Help me," said he, "to stand upright on your neck, so that I can see what is this new danger."

I held up my trunk, and he leaned against it, steadying himself by means of it.

"Don't hesitate," shouted he in a trembling voice. "Throw yourself onto the shore where our enemies are—the river is going to fall in a cataract down into a horrible abyss!"

I swam with all my might towards the shore; but a force greater than mine drew me towards the fall, from which we were now distant only about a hundred yards.

"Courage! courage!" called my Master.

I made a desperate effort, straining every muscle, and putting forth every ounce of strength that I possessed. But I was out of breath, stunned by the fearful roar of the cataract, now so near, and blinded by the spray of the boiling waters.

I felt that hope was at an end. And I was about to abandon effort when I felt the ground under my feet. That revived me; in two strokes I was within a few yards of the shore, standing on a bottom of solid rock, my flanks panting with a cruel lack of breath.

ORTED WITH RAGE I RAN AT HIM, SEIZED HIM WITH MY TRUNK AND DRAGGED HIM FROM THE SADDLE

A SPLENDID PROCESSION WAS FORMED AND BEGAN ITS MARCH. I FOLLOWED NEXT AFTER THE KING

The Prince, whose limbs I could feel still trembled, stroked me with his hand and spoke gently to me. The water ran foaming between my legs as though they were the piers of a bridge; but it could no longer carry me away.

The soldiers now rode up with shouts of joy, and were preparing to aim at their ease, when "*Charge them!*" ordered my Master.

I thundered my war-cry, and rushed at them from the water, with my trunk uplifted.

The horses took fright, plunging and seizing the bit; a number of them ran off "ventre-a-terre."

The captain of the soldiers was furious; mastering his horse by means of the spurs, he fired. The ball passed so close to the head of Alemguir that it singed his hair. At this, transported with rage, I ran at him; I seized him with my trunk, and dragged him out of the saddle. At the shriek which he uttered his companions, instead of coming to his rescue, left him and fled.

For a moment I balanced him in the air, like a trophy; then I tossed him into the middle of

the river, where he fell with a splash almost as great as the one I myself had made recently.

The wretch struggled for a moment, and then was swept on and dashed over the cataract.

CHAPTER X

GANESA

THE sun was shining now, and dried us with its warmth. We were saved. And this joy compensated for all the sufferings we had endured.

The Prince dismounted; standing before me, he gazed gratefully upon me.

"Had it not been for thee," he said, "at this moment my head would be rolling in blood!

"During our flight our safety depended on each moment as it passed—not an instant could be spared—and I have only been able to thank thee in my heart. But now, before this shining Sun, I desire to express the feelings that thy devotion, thy heroism, have inspired in me. Oh! Iravata, had it not been for thee, Saphire-of-Heaven, in robes of mourning, would have wept my death; without thee I should never have lived to behold my child! My name would have been dishonoured by a disgraceful death, my King-

dom conquered and ravaged—whereas, my life being saved, all can be regained. And this I owe to a being whom men deem inferior to themselves! Ah! the Princess of Siam was right. It is indeed a Royal Soul that is hidden in thy rough body!"

I was greatly embarrassed by so much praise: and I could not make it understood that if I had a "Soul," it was simply a good, plain, elephant soul—all full of affection for him who had been the first to treat me as a friend.

He stroked me softly with his hand, and gazing at me smiled kindly; while I by all the means in my power—flapping my ears—snorting—and shuffling my feet, expressed my delight.

"I swear to you," said the Prince, "that hereafter you shall always be treated as an equal, and looked upon as my best friend! . . .

"But let us move on; our enemies may return in force, now that my escape must be known to all."

We descended a steep hill, parallel with the waterfall, and found ourselves in a beautiful

fertile plain, through which the river, grown tranquil and shallow, ran gently over a bed of rocks and pebbles. I was able to wade across with ease a short distance below the cataract, which fell, scattering itself in snowy foam, which the sunlight filled with sparkling rainbows. Here was the leap we had so nearly taken! One could but tremble to look at it, in spite of the loveliness with which Nature had adorned it.

I looked for the horseman who had been dashed to pieces there, but not a trace of him was left.

When we reached the other side we found the plain covered with fresh grass, growing in thick tufts. My Master told me to eat.

"See! there is a fine meal for you," said he, "which you should take advantage of at once. I am sorry that I cannot, like you, breakfast on green bushes! . . . For it is a long time since I have tasted food!"

But how could I eat when he was suffering the pangs of hunger? I continued on my way, as though I had not heard.

"I understand you well, Iravata," said the Prince. "You are refusing to eat because I am compelled to go fasting. But this will not do. I know the requirements of your vast stomach—those of men are more patient!"

I was above all tortured with thirst, and I drank my fill from the river.

"*Eat*, Iravata—your stomach being empty will not fill mine!"

I pulled off here and there bunches of leaves and grass, but without stopping. I looked everywhere for signs of some houses or villages.

"That is useless," said the Prince, who devined my thoughts. "They robbed me of all I had, and did not leave me a diamond, or a rupee; and I am not yet so vanquished by misfortune as to be willing to beg! I have only succeeded in saving my royal Signet. The idea came to me to remove from my finger the ring on which it is engraved, and conceal it in my mouth. But I cannot barter this Seal, which will serve to identify me, for the sake of food. I must wait till we find people who are capable of understanding

the significance of my ring, and who will furnish me with the means of reaching my Kingdom."

My Master was right. He could not sell his ring.

I hurried my steps to get out of this detestable prairie, which seemed to have no end. But though I travelled on and on, the same fresh grass and herbage surrounded us, with from time to time a few tall trees which bore no fruit; and not a sign of any human habitation was to be seen.

The Prince had gathered some large leaves with which to cover his head, and protect it from the burning rays of noon, and had also placed some on mine, knowing how the heat distresses us.

Some cultivated fields now appeared, and presently a group of giant bamboos, and in their midst an edifice of stone, in the form of a beehive.

"It is a Shrine," said Alemguir. "Let us not fail to render homage to the God it shelters,

who meets us thus on our way, before going any further. Our prayers finished it will be well to rest ourselves in the shade of the trees."

What a surprise when I stood before the entrance of the Chapel! The stone God which appeared in the depths on a dais of velvet was a Man with the head of an Elephant!

"Ganesa! the God of Wisdom!" cried the Prince. "It is no chance that has brought us here before Him, to whom more than to all the others I should offer thanks!"

He knelt at the foot of the altar and prayed in a low voice. During this time I, who could not enter the small and narrow building, examined this strange God, who on the body of a Man bore a head like mine, and held the tip of his trunk in his right hand!

I could see the upper part of the altar which was hidden from my Master, being above his head. There were fresh offerings in plates and bowls—Oh! joy! Cakes, melted butter, and various fruits—enough to feed a man for three days!

My trunk reached the Altar. As the Prince finished his prayers I placed, one after another, the plates and dishes before him.

"Offerings!" cried he. "Certainly I would not venture to take them notwithstanding my extreme need; but offered by *thee* I may not refuse; it seems as if the God himself bestowed them on me. . . . And perhaps thou art, thyself, *Ganesa!*"

I was not "Ganesa" but a very happy elephant. My Master ate; and there grew in this place all sorts of grasses and plants that were quite to my taste.

We slept during the hot hours of the day; and later we reached an inhabited place, which was evidently near, judging from the fresh offerings, and also from the odours which my acute sense of smell detected in the air.

It all seemed delicious, after what we had endured; and if it was, indeed, Ganesa who had helped us out of all our troubles, as the Prince seemed to think, I felt disposed to thank him most devoutly—and even to pray to him daily.

For if it is possible for us to have a God—certainly it is Ganesa who should be the God of all Elephants. . . .

CHAPTER XI

WE ARE TAKEN FOR ROBBERS

VARIOUS adventures befell Prince Alemguir and myself at Beejapoor, which was the first city to be reached after leaving the chapel of Ganesa, and where we were obliged to remain several months.

The English (the real masters of India) were in great numbers in Beejapoor, which contained the Residence of a Governor.

While here we were secure from any hostile act on the part of the Maharajah of Mysore, himself an English subject, and permitted to retain his sovereignty only by payment of a tribute; but other dangers threatened us; first of all, *my Master was taken for a thief!*

Seeing him wan, emaciated, almost naked, stripped of everything, his wrists and ankles scarred with the marks of chains, they would listen to nothing he said.

They suspected him of having escaped from prison—and what they accused him of stealing was nothing other than *myself!*

They were about to confiscate me, and separate us, but upon their venturing to lay hands on me my scream of rage scattered and sent flying both the police agents and the idlers that had gathered about, like a flock of sparrows!

The constables returned later, and finally agreed that the unknown stranger might possibly be the owner of the elephant, but he must go before a Magistrate, and make explanations, and the matter would then be decided.

I placed my Master upon my tusks, as I had done once before to protect him from the enemy's bullets, and carrying him thus, to the great astonishment of the crowd, I followed the police agents.

The Magistrate, notwithstanding the evidence, put us through various tests, in order to assure himself that the fugitive was really my owner; but concluded that even if such were the case it did not prevent him from being a dan-

gerous person—a possible "*spy*"—or secret emissary of conspirators—and that he had best be lodged in jail.

Alemguir repeatedly demanded to be brought before the Governor of Beejapoor, to whom he could explain his situation; but the Governor was absent on a hunting expedition, and days passed without his return.

The Prince would have endured all these trials with fortitude had not his mind been tortured by the thought of Saphire-of-Heaven, who might be dying of grief and anxiety.

The retreat of the Army had doubtless made her aware of the defeat and capture of her husband. But since then she had heard nothing. She might suppose him killed, and might refuse to survive him. . . .

The Governor finally returned, and the Prince at once claimed an audience of him.

Sir Percy Murray was a tall, thin man, with a white beard and bright, pleasant, blue eyes—very affable in manner, and with an air of frankness and good humour.

After the Prince had informed him who he was, and had shown him his Royal Signet-ring and recounted his misfortunes and adventures, the Governor expressed regret at the annoyances which his own over-zealous subordinates had caused during his absence, and invited him to be his guest at "Jasmine Cottage" in the suburbs of the city.

My Master urged that he be supplied with the means of returning at once to Golconda, where his absence might occasion disasters; but Sir Percy Murray, in spite of his civilities could not (so he said) allow an unknown person to leave without being assured of his identity; he would be blamed in high places—"and might even forfeit his position"—said he!

But he advised Alemguir to write to his wife and direct her to send some well-known residents of Golconda, and if possible an English witness, to come and identify the Prince; and this done, if he proved to be the person he claimed to be, he would at once be set at liberty.

While awaiting the arrival of the envoys the

Governor of Beejapoor made every effort to entertain the Prince agreeably. His hospitality was most cordial; his family, numerous and full of gayety and good spirits joined him in offering open-air festivals, receptions and balls. And my Master, if not diverted, was at least much interested by the customs, so new to him, of English Society.

At last the messengers returned with a letter from Saphire-of-Heaven, and accompanied by the Uncle of the Prince, and several friends, who wept over him for joy, as they had recently done for sorrow.

Alemguir, treating me as a friend, as he always did, came and read to me the letter of the Princess, and announced that we were to leave the next day.

"If it were possible for you to travel by railroad," added he, "we could arrive the same evening; but it would be difficult, and it might cause you distress! . . . "

So that I was not asked to go by *Sea*, I was willing to travel in any sort of way—and I made

my Master understand that I was quite ready to go by train, so it was settled in that way.

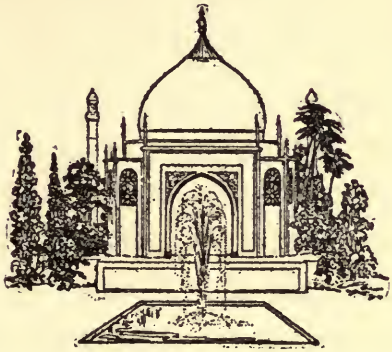
I was installed in a great open car, the floor covered with a thick bedding, and with an awning overhead; and I was assisted to mount by means of a broad gang-plank placed at an easy incline.

One would have supposed that they had never before seen an elephant take a train, for there were a lot of boobies on the platform who had come to see me embark.

The Prince advised me to lie down so as to avoid the jolting as far as possible. And after bidding farewell to the Governor and the English officers who had escorted him to the station, he entered his carriage, and the doors were closed.

A whistle sounded, and the train started. Not being used to travelling in a carriage the motion caused me a slight vertigo—but nothing to compare with the abominable agonies of the voyage from Siam to Ceylon; and the thought of arriving before night filled me with joy, and enabled

me to endure with patience my discomfort, while with increasing rapidity we ran, full speed towards Golconda. . . .



CHAPTER XII

PARVATI

During our absence a little Princess had been born in the Palace of Golconda.

Alemguir, overflowing with joy, brought her to show me, in her baby robes of lace.

What a darling she was! How pretty, and fragile. . . . She was like a Flower!

Her little hand held a golden rattle, and round her neck was a string of great pearls that looked like drops of frozen milk.

They had called her *Parvati*, which is the name of a Goddess. I was filled with deep emotion at the sight of her. My heart beat violently. . . . But I could only express my feelings by awkwardly shuffling from one foot to the other.

Saphire-of-Heaven had been at the point of death, and they had concealed from her the reverses of the army, and the defeat and capture of her husband, the Prince. She had learned at one

and the same time of the dangers he had encountered, and of his present safety. And the anticipation of seeing her husband so soon had aided her convalescence.

When she learned the part I had played in his escape, she came solemnly to thank me. To my great embarrassment she knelt before me, and did me homage, as they had done in Siam. Then she declared that, as my poor Mahout had been killed in battle, I should never have another, but should only be waited on by servants, having shown an intelligence so superior as to make it unnecessary to exercise control over me.

I was hereafter to be allowed complete liberty, in the Park, and throughout the Domain, both in the city and in the country, whenever I chose to walk out by myself.

Then began for me a most delightful existence. I felt as if I had been elevated to the dignity of a human being! And the sense of responsibility attached to this new condition inspired me with the resolve to avoid at all times giving trouble, or creating disturbance—and of

proving myself worthy of the trust reposed in me.

Oh! what pleasure to leave the city, and go out into the fields and on to the forest!—and to roam freely under its branches, treading the underbrush, pulling up the young trees, as of old, without being obliged to consider and restrain my motions, as I was forced to do so often in surroundings that were too small for my stature.

I was able now to use some of my extra strength, and this rested and soothed me delightfully. . . .

But after a few hours I began to feel how impossible it would be for me to endure the former solitude—how superior to myself I had become; and how entirely weaned from savage life.

A restlessness would seize me, a desire to see my Masters—my Friends, rather! . . . A fear of being lost, abandoned—of not being able to find my way back came upon me.

I would hasten towards the city, relieved as soon as I saw the walls of Golconda—its domes,

the colour of snow—its slender minarets, more beautiful than the palms of the forest! Once inside the walls, I loitered about the streets, sauntering through the bazaars, where everyone took pains to offer me something good.

Then I would enter the Palace, and my first thought was always to seek the little Princess Parvati. I would find her surrounded by her nurses and maid-servants, among gardens of jasmine and roses, and I would stand and watch her from a distance, absorbed in delighted admiration.

Slowly I watched her bloom, from day to day, from month to month; soon she was able to roll about on the flowery lawn, and walk, on hands and feet, like a young animal; then she stood up and began to take her first steps among outstretched arms. . . .

CHAPTER XIII

MY PRINCESS

One day—a day that is a burning point in my memory—the little Princess was rather more than a year old, and was able to run and jump finely; it was a short distance from a pretty lake bordered with lotus blossoms of all colours; her governesses were playing checkers, seated on rugs under the trees, while Parvati ran from flower to flower, chasing a splendid butterfly.

I followed her with my eyes, interested in the pursuit. The brilliant wings escaped her continually, fluttered on, and lighted further off; she grew impatient, and more and more eager in the chase, following the thousand zig-zags of the beautiful pink and blue butterfly, which seemed like a winged flower.

To my mind the little Princess was straying too far away, and approaching dangerously near the borders of the lake.

Why did they not call her back?

I looked over at the women. Two of them were playing checkers; all the others were watching the game, bending over the checker-board, and arguing about it with great volubility; they were completely absorbed, and not one was giving attention to her whom they were employed to watch over.

Trembling with indignation, I was about to run to them and upset their checker-board, when I beheld Parvati on the very brink of the water, and still running forward—the butterfly had lighted on a lotus. I was paralyzed with anguish, but not for long; for in an instant the little Princess had fallen, without a splash, or a cry that might have aroused attention.

In three bounds I was at the spot where she had disappeared among the lotus and the nenuphars. I groped and rummaged in the water with my trunk among the matted stems.

A cloud of mud rose from the bottom, obscuring everything, and the next few seconds seemed to me horribly, horribly long.

All the women now rushed up, uttering deafening cries, wringing their hands and tearing their clothing. It was high time truly!—but much good did it do! I would have been glad to throw them all into the lake. . . .

At last I found and grasped the poor little Princess, and raised her, unconscious, and as if dead—dripping, and covered with black mud.

The governesses attempted to take her away from me in order to conceal their fault; but I was resolved it should be known, and, paying no regard to their clamours, I started to run to the palace.

It was a reception day; Saphire-of-Heaven was in the great Hall of the Throne, surrounded by courtiers and the Ladies of her suite. I entered without ceremony, interrupting the conversation, and the dances of the Bayaderes, and going straight to the Queen, I laid on her knees the child, all covered with mud, and without breath or motion.

Saphire-of-Heaven at first could not understand what had happened, and was about to

throw off the black mass which was saturating her dress, but suddenly *she recognized Parvati*:

"My Daughter!" exclaimed she, "and in what a condition! Dead, perhaps!"

A physician was present and advanced.

"Calm yourself, your Majesty," said he, "It is only a fainting fit."

He took the child, removed its wet clothing, gave orders, and all present hastened to busy themselves in services to the little Princess.

The governesses had entered all in confusion behind me. They now undertook to explain matters, all talking together, with protestations, adjurations, and tears—it was totally incomprehensible. . . .

"Be silent," said the Queen; "Do not speak except to answer my questions!"

She then began to interrogate the women.

"The Princess Parvati fell into the lake," said one sobbing. A negress added:

"It was the White Elephant who pushed her in."

I gave her on the instant such a blow on the

back with my trunk that she fell to the floor.

"That woman has lied," said Saphire-of-Heaven. "Send all of them to prison. We shall soon learn the truth. For the present I must think only of my Daughter!"

In spite of the tears and supplications of the women, their arms were bound with silk cords, and they were removed, while the Negress was carried out on a stretcher.

Parvati, now revived, bathed, and wrapped in a veil of gold gauze lent by one of the Ladies, was replaced on the lap of the Queen.

The little darling seemed quite surprised at finding herself there, and did not appear to remember anything that had happened. She gazed at the smiling guests with her beautiful eyes opened wide under their long, black lashes, then shyly, she threw her arms around her mother's neck and hid her face on the Queen's breast.

She was not dead—not even hurt. What joy! I shuffled my feet, and teetered foolishly from side to side, and flapped my ears, having no other way of expressing my satisfaction.

"Iravata," said the Queen, stroking my forehead with her gentle hand, "We will find out what has happened, and you shall assist us in doing so. Never, never could I doubt thee, or believe that thou hadst been guilty of a wicked action. Perhaps it will prove that I shall again have to thank thee; it may be that I owe to thee the life of my Daughter, as I already owe that of my Husband!"

It was true; without me our lovely little flower would have been lost! If I had unfortunately been away from the palace at the moment, wandering in the forest, or in the bath, or eating a meal—or even absent-minded, and looking in another direction, it would have been a dead little girl that would have been taken out of the water. I shivered at the thought! and made up my mind never to lose sight of her again, and for this purpose I determined to give up my excursions, and my trips outside of the city.

The disturbance in the palace had attracted the notice of the King, and it had been impossible to conceal from him the accident which had

happened to the Princess. He came in, much agitated; but Parvati ran to him, laughing, and quite recovered, delighted with the long golden veil in which she was wrapped, and which trailed behind her, making a noise on the carpet!

After having tenderly embraced his daughter, Alemguir asked for details of the accident, and as no one could furnish any, he directed that a search be made at once of the locality where it had occurred.

"Iravata," said he, "conduct us to the spot."

I obeyed immediately. The King, who carried Parvati in his arms, the Queen, and all the guests followed me, deeply interested.

Having reached the borders of the lake, I showed the King the overturned checker-board, and all the pieces scattered about, as when the game was interrupted. But they failed to understand what this had to do with the Princess having fallen into the water.

They examined with much emotion the spot where she fell—the broken lotus flowers, and the turf all trampled by my feet.

PARVATI RAN TO HIM, LAUGHING AND QUITE RECOVERED

But all this explained nothing. *Who* was the guilty one? *Who* should be punished?

The women were brought again and questioned. But they continued to lie, making statements that were contradictory, but all accusing me.

"He came past us like a hurricane, terrifying us to death! The Princess was running on before him, and he pushed her into the lake."

"And then," inquired Alemguir, "who rescued her?"

"We did—we did: but the Elephant snatched her away from us and ran to the palace!"

The Prince looked at me, and I made a sign that this was not so.

"Let them be beaten till they are ready to speak the truth."

At once there was a concert of shrieks, which redoubled in shrillness when the slaves appeared armed with thongs of leather.

The King gave the word: the slaves seized, each one, a woman, threw her onto her knees, and administered a blow with the lash. One was suf-

ficient to loosen their tongues and it was a race to see which could tell the story first.

"I am listening," said the King, and he designated the one who should be spokeswoman.

"Have mercy upon us, oh Mighty King," said she: "*we are guilty!* This is what happened: Annanta was playing a game of checkers with Zobeide, and the game turned out very extraordinary. We were all looking on, interested in spite of ourselves, but at the same time keeping watch over the dear Princess, who was gathering flowers and bringing them to us. Unfortunately, we were tempted to make wagers, and at the decisive moment our attention was entirely absorbed by the progress of the game. His Lordship, the White Elephant, had been standing for a long time looking through the bushes. All at once with a terrific roar he rushed through, tearing apart the branches, trampling the flowers, and ran towards the lake, from which after a moment he lifted the Princess."

The King approached me with tears in his eyes.

"Thou art verily our Good Genius, oh Iravata!" said he; "after saving me from a shameful death, thou hast now restored to me my daughter! Certainly there is not anywhere upon earth a *man* to whom I owe such a debt of gratitude, as to thee. Let those miserable women be sent away in exile," added he. "So much for the punishment of the Guilty; but how to recompense worthily the Rescuer?"

I would have been glad to be able to speak, and say that no reward could be more to me than the happiness of seeing them all alive, and of being allowed to live near them.

Saphire-of-Heaven shed floods of tears kneeling at the edge of the watery gulf that had so nearly deprived her of her child. All at once she rose, took Parvati in her arms, and held her out towards me.

"Oh, thou! my unknown Ancestor! Thou who so evidently protects us, accept the guardianship of my Daughter; I confide her to thee; thou only shalt watch over her, and in that way anxiety and dread will no longer afflict my heart!"

The little Princess Parvati to be mine! Mine this exquisite human flower whom I loved above all else! It was I who was to protect and watch over her, and be always near her! It filled me with enthusiastic delight, and I gave such a formidable blast of the trumpet that all the guests trembled.

I stopped short, ashamed and distressed, lest my beloved little one might have been frightened, and not care to have me for a guardian. But no, quite the reverse; she laughed and clapped her little hands together, crying:

"More—*more!*"

So to please her I trumpeted again—but this time rather less violently!

CHAPTER XIV

ELEPHANT GAMES

WHAT a paradise for me were the years during which I was the Slave of that Child!

She accepted me at once, and a sympathy and understanding that was extraordinary existed between us. She was beginning to talk, and from her, with no trouble at all I learned Hindostani; till then an interpreter had been attached to my service, with no other duty than that of translating into Siamese such words as it was necessary for me to understand. I had, of course, remembered a few—but very few—and rarely an entire sentence; but with Parvati, who was, herself, slowly but surely acquiring a *language*—I acquired it too.

I was the one to whom she talked most, and whenever I failed to understand her she would go obstinately over and over the same words. Generally it was about some new play that she

had in her mind. With a playmate like me you can imagine that the games were far from usual!

"Swing me!" she would say.

Then I would bend my trunk inward a little, so as to form a sort of living arm-chair, which would support her lightly and prevent her from falling, and swing her gently back and forth. Her laughter was like a shower of pearls, but she was never satisfied.

"Harder! Harder!" she would cry, and I quickened the motion and sent her higher and higher, until, when I felt it was becoming dangerous, I stopped.

Then she would get angry and try to beat me. But her tender little hands hurt themselves on my rough skin, and she would stop, ready to cry, and say:

"Hateful thing! You prick me!"

To comfort her I would stroll towards the fountain, and she would follow clapping her hands. . . .

"Oh, yes—yes, make the water-spout."

This consisted in drawing up an enormous

quantity of water (we are capable of holding in our stomachs an incredible amount), and of raising my trunk and spouting it out in sprays, jets, and showers. The sun shining on the little drops made them sparkle with all the colours of the rainbow.

With uplifted head and with ecstatic eyes, Parvati would look on. She did not laugh nor exclaim, but said gravely:

"That is beautiful!"

Her one fixed idea was to get on my back and go for a promenade. But a fall from such a mountain as I would have been terrible for her, and I opposed a firm resistance.

At the same time I studied how I might find a way of gratifying her with safety.

After much reflection I thought of something. I pulled a number of pliant flexible reeds, and with great effort and much patience, I managed to twist them together in a manner to form a kind of basket or hammock which could hang from my neck, and in which I carefully placed my little Princess. In this way it was as if she were

resting on my heart, and I could watch over her, shelter her from the sun, and protect her from any danger.

She was enchanted with my invention, and Saphire-of-Heaven was equally pleased; only the Queen ordered my shapeless work replaced by a more complete and perfect construction. The promenade now became one of our favourite pastimes.

We went all about the city, under trees that shaded fountains of porphry.

The Brahmans who passed in their shining white robes, murmured a benediction on the daughter of their king; the cavaliers whom we met riding on horses whose manes were braided and decorated with fringes, or mounted on elephants richly caparisoned, saluted her with affectionate smiles; the noble ladies stopped their litters drawn by white oxen to speak a few words with her. But what most pleased her was the People, who shouted with joy, when they saw her coming, suspended like a Pearl from my neck! The merchants, the blacks, who all greeted her

with acclamations—and above all the children, the crowds of little friends, for whom she was like a Fairy Queen.

We stopped before the temple of Vichnu which rises like a great bee-hive of stone against the blue sky. And in a moment we were surrounded by a world of little children, half dressed, and running bare-footed in the dust, laughing, screaming, and making a joyous and deafening noise.

The Princess leaned forward, and, holding up her little hand, imposed silence upon her subjects. They became instantly mute, and ranged themselves in a circle about us.

"Which of you has been good?" inquired she with a majestic air.

"Me . . . Me . . . " the entire assembly replied invariably with one voice!

"If you tell lies Brahma will know it, and Allah too, and you will be whipped!"

"No! No! *Very* good!" was the answer on all sides.

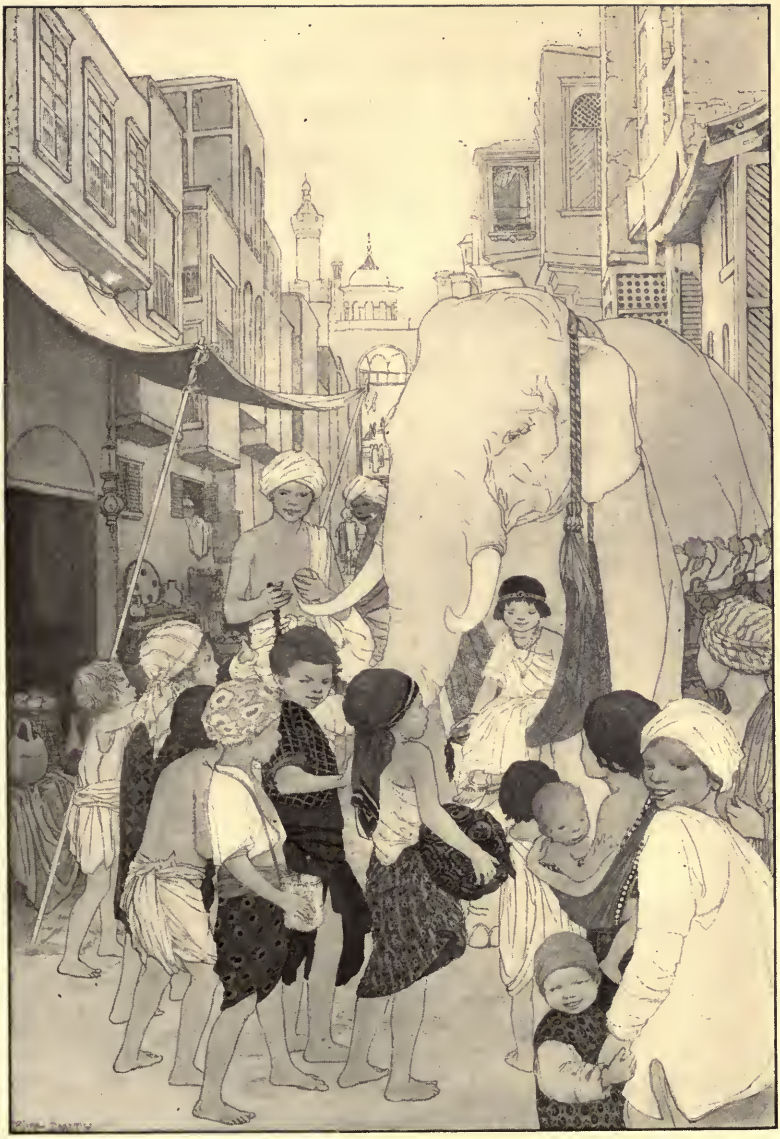
"Well then, we will go to the Bazaar!"

At this the shouts began louder than ever, and like a cloud of sparrows, as soon as I moved on, all the little urchins jumped and capered around us in the dust; some of the boys went so far as to turn summersaults, a performance which it must be admitted enchanted the Princess.

A purse filled with rupees was attached to one of my tusks, and we bought at the Bazaar all sorts of dainties and pretty things.

Each child, after pondering deeply—usually with its finger in its mouth—announced what it would best like to have; mangoes, bananas, oranges, sherbet, pastry-cakes, preserves, or perhaps a necklace of "vamba" beads as red as coral, bracelets of enamelled clay—a parasol—slippers; some asked for a tunic, or a veil of muslin. . . .

I, myself was never forgotten. I also was expected to choose what I would like, and I always selected a pastry-shop, where my appetite was allowed full sway. I gobbled pies, cookies, cream-cakes, biscuits, buns—the entire stock. I was terribly ashamed of my greediness, but could



"WHICH OF YOU HAS BEEN GOOD?" SHE INQUIRED

not restrain myself. I was the one whose tastes were the most expensive!

The change for the last rupee I scattered in a shower, and while the little ones were engaged in picking up the bits of money we left.

Sometimes they ran after, and rejoined us. Then they formed a ring and joined hands in a gay dance, holding us captive in their happy circle.

Parvati in her basket would stir restlessly: she longed to get down and mingle in the dance, but her dignity of Princess forbade such a thing. When I suspected that her feet were getting the better of her, I broke through the circle with a stern motion, and carried her rapidly away.

CHAPTER XV

SCIENCE

THE education of Parvati had begun, to her great displeasure—and to mine. For long hours she had to listen to the Brahmans, instead of playing with me, or going to harangue the happy little vagabonds of the city. Music, dancing, poetry, writing—it was all terrible! and I could hear my beloved weeping—screaming—stamping, in the midst of her respectful but stern teachers.

I stood at the door of the schoolroom, helpless, with drooping head, replying with groans to the furious outcries of the rebellious pupil.

Sometimes she escaped, all in tears, and ran towards me, encircling my trunk with her little arms, and crying:

"Take me away! Let us run to the forest, away from the wicked Brahmans!"

But the head Brahman in his white robe

would appear, and hiding a kindly smile under an outward appearance of severity, take the naughty girl away from me. . . .

At last she obtained permission to learn her lessons in the basket hanging from my neck, while I walked slowly along under the trees of the park.

I remember especially a Fable which gave us a great deal of trouble to learn, the birds and the butterflies so distracted our attention during those hours of Study! But we succeeded at last, and if I could only have spoken I could have prompted the little Princess many a time when she made mistakes in her recitations.

It was a very pretty Fable and was intended to teach us that one cannot be too cautious in this life. And, as I still remember it, I will give myself the pleasure of writing it down from beginning to end, without the least fear of making any mistake. It was called:

The Crane and the Crawfish

In a beautiful forest there was a great Pool,

inhabited by all kinds of fish; on its banks a Crane had her dwelling. This Crane was old, and could no longer catch the Fish to feed on them. Therefore, with a throat contracted by hunger, she stood on the edge of the Pool and wept; she moistened the ground with her tears, which glistened like innumerable pearls.

Standing on one slender leg which looked like the stalk of a flower, and with her neck curved downwards, the sly Crane deceived the silly Fish, who took her for a Lotus.

Now, a Crawfish, accompanied by many others of the Water-people, approached, and pitying the distress of the Crane, inquired respectfully:

"Friend, why is it that you are not, as usual, seeking your dinner, and why do you utter these tearful sighs?"

"My child," said the Crane, "what you have observed is true. I do, indeed, make my dinner ordinarily of fish, but behold! I have renounced all appetite for food, and intend to let myself die of starvation; so that no matter how near they come to me I shall never eat fish again!"

When the Crawfish heard this she said:

"Friend, what is the reason for this renunciation of all appetite?"

"My child," said the Crane, "I was born and brought up on the borders of this Pool. I have learned that a terrible calamity threatens it; an absence of rain for twelve years is about to occur."

"How did you learn this?" asked the Crawfish.

"An eminent Astrologer informed me," replied the Crane. "Alas! this Pool is shallow, it holds but little water, and will soon be empty; and when it is dry all those with whom I grew up and played, will perish for lack of water. I have not the courage to witness such a catastrophe. That is why I am fasting thus, until death takes place; and I weep to think that not one of you will escape!"

When the Crawfish heard this she repeated to the other inhabitants the words of the Crane; and all the Fishes, the Tortoises, and other Water-people felt their hearts quake with fear and an-

guish. They all gathered around the Crane and cried:

"Friend, is there no way of saving our lives?"

"There is," said the Crane, "not far from here, a fine Lake full of deep water, and embellished with quantities of lotus. Even if Pardjania, the God of rain, should refuse to permit showers to fall for twenty years, that Lake would not become exhausted. If, therefore, any of you care to mount up on my back, I will carry you to that Lake."

Now the Fishes had confidence in these words, and assembled from all sides, calling out:

"Take me! . . . Take me! . . . Me first! Me first!" . . .

The wicked Crane made them climb one after another onto her back, then she flew towards a great Rock situated a short distance off, and threw them all down on it—and devoured them at her ease.

"Friend," said the Crawfish, "it was with me that you had your first friendly conversation—why do you leave me behind, and take the oth-

ers? Will you not save my life along with the rest?"

When the wicked Crane heard this, she thought to herself, "I am tired of eating fish, so to-day I will take this crawfish for a change!"

So she allowed the Crawfish to mount on her back, and began the journey to the Rock of sacrifice.

The Crawfish saw from a distance a great pile of bones on the Rock. She recognized them as the remains of the Fishes, and asked the Crane:

"Friend, how much further is this Lake? Are you not fatigued by my weight?"

"Crawfish," replied the Crane, "what makes you think that there is another Lake? I invented it, in order to preserve my life. Now then, call upon your tutelar Divinity—for I am going to throw you down on the Rock, and eat you!"

But no sooner had she finished speaking than her neck, which was as white and as tender as a lotus stem, was seized and pinched by the claws of the Crawfish—and her life was ended.

The Crawfish then bit off the neck of the Crane, and quietly returned to the Pool.

"Oh, Crawfish! Why have you come back?" asked all the Water-people on seeing her. "Has anything happened? And where is the Crane? Why has not she returned? We are disappointed at not seeing her!"

When they had spoken thus the Crawfish laughed, and said:

"Fools that you are! The deceitful Crane has betrayed all the Fish, and has thrown them all onto a Rock not far from here, and eaten them. Fate decreed that my life was to be spared, and I discovered her treachery, and cut her throat. You need have no further anxiety; we Water-people will now be able to live happily hereafter. . . . "

Now, I think that was a very nice Fable.

CHAPTER XVI

FINE CLOTHES

Alas! Parvati was growing up. She was as beautiful as the Sun, and as pretty as the Moon; but she was no longer the playful child who cared for nothing so much as to be with me.

She was now a real Princess, and her mother instructed her in all the rules of etiquette and the ceremonies of the Court.

Her toilet occupied her a great deal—she, who till now had thought nothing of tearing her tunics on any bramble!

As I was privileged in every way and allowed to do as I pleased, I rarely left the neighbourhood of the pavilion in which she lived, and almost always contrived to keep my Princess in sight, through one or the other of the large windows, or else on the verandahs embowered in flowers.

It chanced very often in this way that I was

permitted to watch the labours of the dressing-maids (though I could not see why they took so much trouble to embellish a beauty which was already so perfect).

The slaves would bring water from the Ganges, in which they bathed Parvati; they showered her with "*santal*," and powdered her with safran, which gave her the appearance of a golden statue. Then they threw over her a "sari" (which is a thin garment, as light as a mist), and she sat down cross-legged on a purple velvet cushion. Then the hairdressers came forward; and her hair, which was as dark and shining as a river of night, was divided into two portions and combed, and perfumed, and ornamented with pearls and jasmine flowers. Next they stained the palms of her hands and the soles of her feet a beautiful reddish orange-colour with "*mendhi*"; she nibbled a bit of "*betel*" to darken the colour of her gums; her long eyes and thick eyebrows were blackened with "*surmeh*," and her rosy lips were tinted blue with "*missi*"; on her ankles were fastened little bells attached

to golden rings; a golden girdle encircled her waist, and they loaded her neck and arms with necklaces and bracelets.

Arrayed in this way I could hardly recognize her; she seemed so majestic, so dignified—so different from herself, that it saddened me a little with the feeling that she was growing away from me.

And now when we went out she was no longer reclining in the basket against my heart; she was mounted on my back, installed in a sumptuous "howdah" with double bell-towers of gold and curtains of pale green silk.

Still she would not permit a servant to accompany us, nor any of her suite. Freedom, and my companionship were still what she liked best.

"Do you know, Iravata," said she, "when my slight form is carried by your colossal strength, I feel as if I were a Goddess! I feel inaccessible, like the blue God Vichnu, and invincible, like the hero Rama! I seem made so great by thy power, and devotion, and courage, that my pride is exalted, and I feel as if on a throne—like the primi-

tive Lotus that supports Brahmah. But when I dismount how humiliated I feel at being only a poor little princess, obliged to walk on the ground!"

On hearing this I was so pleased that I had to shuffle my feet, flap my ears, and utter little grunts of satisfaction!

We no longer strolled about the city, frequenting the public places, and the fountains, as in the old times. I promenaded the streets with a solemn dignified step; but, once outside of the city gates, I quickened my pace and sought the Forest.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ABDUCTION

One day a most culpable idea came into my head. Parvati had for some time past shown herself extremely irritated by the constantly increasing demands of her position as Princess; by the Receptions, the Parades, the long dissertations of the Brahmans upon the present and the future Life, and the interminable Poems, recited in a monotonous voice by the court Poet in reference to the most insignificant events that occurred at the palace.

"Oh!" said she, "to be free! to be only a simple mortal! To do only what one likes to do! without being obliged to wear a mask, and force oneself to smile, when one feels like weeping—or to be solemn, when one wants to laugh!" . . .

To be free! I also thought of it during the long days when I was deprived of her companionship. . . .

Well! It was easy enough! We had but to steal away to the depths of the forest, and never return!

I refused to consider the wickedness of such a scheme. I repelled all the objections that might have suggested themselves, and one day, leaving the palace of Golconda as if for an ordinary promenade, I was firmly resolved never to return to it.

I gained the forest more quickly than usual, and pushed on to portions far beyond those where we had previously ventured.

At this distance I felt safe. I was quite sure they could not pursue us, for it had not rained for a long time, and the dry ground showed no trace of my enormous feet. Still, in order to make sure, I marched for half an hour along the bed of a shallow stream, to throw the dogs off the scent, and when I again stepped onto the ground I felt confident that I was now, indeed, to be for a long time alone with my dear little Princess Parvati.

At last I had quitted that Court where every-

thing combined to separate me from my little friend—ceremonies, etiquette, the great festivals, and the thousand demands of the toilette, which occupied her at all hours of the day, in order that she might never appear in public twice in the same costume.

Now, there would be no more of all that. She was going to live quietly and happily in the forest, like a little Hermit, served and waited on by a great White Slave! And I would take such good care of her—serve her so devotedly—with such thoughtfulness, such affection, such love! . . .

She was so light on my back that I did not feel her any more than if she had been a green fly, or a little blue-bird that had lighted on my rough skin. But I could hear her singing—and her voice delighted me. She was singing a very long and very beautiful song which one of her Maids of Honour had taught her; it was called the "*Gita Govinda*," and I think she did not understand it very well, but she liked it all the better on that account.

From time to time I raised my trunk and she clasped the tip in her little fingers, and laughingly "shook hands" with me! She was delighted with this excursion, for it was the first of the kind she had taken. Of course, she had heard of the deep parts of the forest, filled with bright flowers, and she knew that she had not been allowed to come here for fear some heavy fruit might fall on her from a tree, or a venomous serpent dart out upon her. She was not fond of contradictions—nor of being thwarted by obstacles of any sort, and being forbidden to enter it, she was all the more desirous to do so; it was, therefore, with great glee that she permitted her good friend Iravata to conduct her to the *Forbidden Forest.*

At the expiration of a couple of hours we had penetrated to the very heart of the wild wood.

The trees overhead were of a prodigious height, and their tops so full of leaves that the sunlight could not pass through. No plants grew at their feet, and there were neither bushes nor vines; nothing but an endless number of tall slender trunks without branches; it was as if we

had entered the colonnade of an immense temple. Parvati was a little afraid now of this vast solitude—this profound silence. She no longer sang, and when she spoke her voice sounded sad. . . .

I hastened, therefore, to go in another direction. I remembered that a short distance from where we were the ground rose gently till it formed a little hillock, which was celebrated for its beauty; so I turned in that direction, and soon reached the spot. A perfumed breeze wafted from it the sound of birds singing in the branches, and Parvati began again her song.

This new forest was wonderfully beautiful. There were so many flowers growing here that as I walked on and crushed them, my feet were stained as red as if I had been walking in blood. The trees bore more flowers than leaves, and swarms of bees buzzed among the branches. Little blossoms of blue and yellow bloomed even on the trunks of the trees, having pierced the bark with their tiny roots. There were great beds of tall plants which bore rich and fragrant blos-

soms. These were the *Sacred Flowers*, the dwelling place of the *Good Fairies*, who bestow great joys, and fulfill desires and hopes.

Parvati wished to dismount and gather some of them. I wrapped my trunk around her slender waist, and placed her—like another flower—among the crimson blossoms. She picked seven of the handsomest, made an opening in the centre of each, and threaded them on a thin stem, which held them together without crushing them. Then she unfastened her hair and shook it down over her shoulders, and arranged the wreath upon her head as best she could. I had never seen her look so pretty; her royal head-dresses were too heavy and elaborate and weighed down her delicate head. I would have preferred always to see her crowned only with this wreath of flowers which she herself had made without the aid of either slaves or mirrors.

I replaced her gently on my back and resumed my march through the forest. The vines had now become so numerous and so tall that I could no longer step over them; sometimes I had to

rise on my hind legs and place my forefeet upon a tangle of green creepers that barred the way. The weight of my body was barely sufficient to break through these natural barriers and open a path before us.

Often too, the trees grew so close together, and the branches hung so low that my dear little Parvati might have been struck and scratched by the twigs and briars; at such times I lifted my trunk and held up, out of her way, all that might have touched her—on whom I would not have permitted so much as a flower to rest and annoy her!

All that she saw delighted her. Great birds flew by with wonderful feathers, and she regretted not being able to catch them and make fans of their beautiful red and green tails. She longed to possess the little monkeys that chattered when they saw her, and threw down little nuts and fruits that lodged in her hair. She wanted the big insects that glittered in the sunshine, and hummed about the clustering flowers. . . . Alas! I could not give her any of them!

What is more, I would not have cared to continue the excursion with a whole menagerie on my back! To tell the truth I was rather jealous of the attention Parvati gave to all these things, so much more beautiful than I. . . .

The sun was about to set and the forest was transfigured in the red evening rays, when we reached the borders of a lake, all surrounded by trees, and so overgrown with lotus flowers that the water could hardly be seen.

Parvati wished to dismount; I assisted her—but soon repented of my imprudence, when I saw her unfasten her long robe of silk and gold, throw it on the bank, and plunge into the shining water. . . .

Like a careful nurse, I was alarmed lest my little mistress should catch cold, and I made desperate signals to her with my trunk to come out. . . . But she only looked at me coaxingly, took a lotus in each of her hands, and crossed her arms on her breast, as they do before the statues of Lachmi, when asking favours or returning thanks. So I let her remain. . . . I was weak

enough to permit her to do so. . . . She was so joyous and full of spirits! I could see just her little round head among the lotus flowers, as she pushed them aside, walking on the bottom of the lake; only her laughing mouth and brilliant eyes showed under her wet drooping hair. She left behind her a trail of perfume on which floated the blue powder and the santal that had been scattered over her to give her the colour of the skies.

And soon she might have been taken for any ordinary little girl had it not been for a look of royalty that shone in her eyes.

CHAPTER XVIII

RETRIBUTION

THE sun had set; Parvati was returning slowly to the shore and preparing to resume her silken robe, when she uttered a piercing shriek, and covered her face with her hands—trembling in every limb. I followed the direction of her glance, and a shudder seized me also, when I perceived, coiled in the tall grass, a serpent of the most venomous species, which had fixed its gaze on Parvati, prepared to spring as soon as she should place foot upon the bank.

Oh! how was I now punished for my wrong-doing! The pain which pierced my heart at seeing Parvati in danger led me to realize how Saphire-of-Heaven and Alemguir must have suffered at not seeing their beloved daughter return at the accustomed hour.

Had I then sunk to the level of a selfish brute —a being without reflection—a mere elephant?

having had the shameful idea of stealing the Princess away from her family and her Court. . . . Now she was perhaps lost forever—and I with her; for I was resolved not to survive her if she perished from the venom of this frightful reptile.

These distracting thoughts rushed with terrible rapidity through my head, and almost deprived me of my presence of mind. Fortunately, it returned to me. I uttered a sudden roar, and at the same time leaped towards the serpent, who, surprised and alarmed, quickly unwound its coils, and hid itself in the leaves.

It now turned towards me—spitting and hissing—and this was what I desired, to distract its attention from the Princess. She now left the water, and climbed once more onto the bank; she was safe. But, clasping her hands, she called to me, imploring me to be careful of the bite of the fearful creature, and urging me to escape with her rather than to risk a battle.

I could not answer and tell her that my thick leathery skin had nothing to fear from the bite

of the serpent, except around the eyes or lips, and I was far too angry at the fright it had caused me to refrain from taking summary vengeance.

The enemy did not move; it fixed the shining gaze of its lidless eyes upon me, and darted its forked tongue in and out, like a black flame; then it coiled again, in readiness to spring.

The upper portion of its body was now half hidden under the leaves, the middle was wound around a tree, but the creature was so long that a part still trailed on the ground. I put my foot on that portion, and bore down upon it with all my weight.

Then the snake quickly stretched itself to its full length, whipping the leaves and the branches of the tree with furious hissings. It was struggling to escape, and not succeeding, it came at me again with such a lightning-like spring that I was unable to avoid it. It twined itself around my legs, and around my neck, biting furiously with wide-opened jaws, but only breaking its fangs on my tough hide. The danger for me was of an altogether different kind. With gi-

I UTTERED A SUDDEN ROAR AND AT THE SAME TIME LEAPED TOWARD THE SERPENT

gantic strength it tightened more and more its clasp about my limbs, and what was more serious, twisted itself around my throat in a way that threatened to stop my breath.

It was impossible to reach it with my tusks—it was too close—and I was in a truly pitiable situation.

What, alas! would become of Parvati, left alone in the wood, if I should be strangled by this monster?

And closer, and still closer, the living rope tightened about me. . . . I could no longer move in spite of my efforts, and the blood roared in my ears under the increasing and suffocating pressure. . . . I threw myself desperately on the ground, rolling madly over and over, seeking to crush my enemy beneath my weight. I rubbed and ground it on the rough earth and the thorny bushes. The battle was long. But at last I felt the cold slimy coils soften, relax, and finally let go their grasp.

I rose, panting.

The serpent lay full length on the ground, still

squirming a little, and looking like a river of blood and ink.

I fell to work, and stamped on it, and tore it to ribbons with my tusks—till it was completely destroyed.

When my rage was thoroughly appeased I turned, proud and pleased, to seek Parvati. Ah! how bitterly did I now repent of the crime I had committed in carrying her off! . . .

My Princess lay on the ground, pale and motionless—and to all appearance dead.

CHAPTER XIX

THE HERMIT

THE night had fallen rapidly; it was very dark under the thick branches of the trees, which even at midday cast a dense shadow.

What was to be done? How was I to obtain succour for the Princess, whom I could now barely see, as she lay motionless on the ground?

I raised the upper part of her body very gently with my trunk, and swayed her softly back and forth, and fanned her with my ears—but she did not stir. The thought that she might be dead so horrified me that, without waiting to take breath, I poured forth groans and screams so piercing that they were mistaken for those of a human being—and it was this that finally extricated us from our misfortunes.

All at once I saw, far off under the leaves, a little red light that seemed to be advancing. It surely was a lantern, and that meant that here, in the wilderness, there was a human being.

I redoubled my cries of distress, and the light approached more rapidly. It was turned in our direction, and I could not see the person who was carrying it.

At some distance it stopped, and a feeble, and somewhat tremulous voice called:

"Who is it that is moaning? Who is it that disturbs the quiet of the forest by these cries? Can it be this elephant? How happens it that his cries are like those of a man?"

I lifted the Princess on my tusks and laid her in the rays of the lantern.

"Oh, the poor child!" exclaimed the Voice, and an old man came forward and placed his brown and withered hand over the heart of Parvati.

"She has swooned," said he. "Come, follow me. We must lose no time; do you not see that a storm is impending? We must not remain an instant longer under the trees."

He began to walk rapidly on, holding the lantern in a way to light the path, on which I followed, carefully carrying the unconscious Princess.

We soon reached a great clearing, in the centre of which, leaning against a rock, was a little hut built of wooden planks.

"Here we are, this is my dwelling," said the man; "I am only a poor hermit, who has retired in disgust from the world, in order to live and meditate in solitude. I am denuded of all; I possess nothing. But the forest provides me with plants which nourish me. Some of them have wonderful virtues, which I trust will enable me to restore to life this lovely young girl."

The hut was so small that I could only thrust my head inside. I placed Parvati on the Hermit's bed of leaves, and he hung up the lantern. He then crushed between his hands an herb that had a pungent odour, which he caused the Princess to inhale, while he rubbed her temples and her wrists. To my great joy Parvati revived; she passed her hands across her eyes, and then, seeing me, she smiled.

"Oh! my dear Iravata," exclaimed she: "the terrible serpent did not strangle you! I was so terrified I thought I was dying!"

She then related to the Hermit all that had befallen us, and what a friend I had always been to her. He in his turn told how he had heard my cries and hastened to our assistance.

He was able to offer the Princess some delicate fruits, which she accepted gladly, as she had eaten nothing all day.

"Oh, Holy Man," said she, "is it possible that you live all alone in the depths of this forest? How sad and lonely you must find it!"

"No, child," replied he: "those who live in company with their own thoughts are never lonely. Instead of looking only at the life that is now passing, or has passed away—as you do—I look forward to the mystery of the hereafter, to what is to be after death. And I find this enough to occupy every minute of the day and the night!"

"Oh, Holy Man," said she: "why do you despise life? To me it seems sweet and full of joy, and my heart sinks at the thought that it cannot last forever!" . . .

A vivid flash of lightning startled the Prin-

cess, who shrieked, and hid her face in her hands.

I pushed my head further into the door of the hut so as to close the opening and shut out the glare.

"Poor little thing!" said the Hermit. "Here I am talking about death and oblivion to this lovely flower that blooms and delights all around her!"

He gently removed the hands which she still held clenched before her eyes:

"Fear nothing," said he. "We are safe and sheltered here from the violence of the storm."

Then, in order to reassure her, and to distract her attention, he added:

"If you like, I will tell you a Story, and it will show you why I no longer care for a world where good fortune often attends a thief or a liar, and brings them to honour."

"Oh, yes!" said Parvati. "By all means tell me this Story!"

"Listen, then," said the Hermit.

* * * * * * *

"Once upon a time there was a humble Brah-

man named Harisarman. He was very poor and ignorant, and possessed a numerous family. After being compelled for a long time to make his living by begging, he and his family were received into the household of a rich man named Sthuladatta. The children of Harisarman were employed to drive the cows, herd the sheep, and tend the poultry; his wife worked in the house, and he, himself, was attached to the service of the Master.

"One day Sthuladatta gave an entertainment to celebrate the marriage of his daughter, but he omitted to invite Harisarman to the festival.

" 'Behold!' said Harisarman to his wife: 'I am despised because of my poverty and ignorance. But I shall pretend to be a learned man, in order that Sthuladatta will have respect for me hereafter; and when an opportunity occurs you must say that I am an accomplished Soothsayer.'

"Then he took the Bridegroom's horse out of the stable, and went to a distant part of the forest, and hid it.

"When the feast was over, and the Bridegroom

prepared to return home with his young Bride, his horse was nowhere to be found. The forest was searched, the thickets ransacked; the guests all dispersed in different directions to assist in finding the animal—but no trace of him could be discovered.

"Then the wife of Harisarman came forward, and said:

" 'My husband could have found the horse very easily; he is a learned Soothsayer, and understands the language of the stars. Why do you not inquire of him?'

Sthuladatta sent for Harisarman, and said:

" 'Canst thou tell me where to look for the lost horse?'

"Harisarman replied:

" 'Master, thou hast bidden a host of guests to be present at the marriage of thy daughter; but thou didst not deign to invite me because I am poor. Behold! among all those whom thou hast honoured not one can tell thee where to look for thy son-in-law's horse, and thou art obliged to have recourse to me, whom thou hast treated with

contempt! Nevertheless, I am not revengeful; and thanks to my learning, I will be able to inform thee where thou wilt find the horse whom thou seekest.'

"He then drew cabalistic signs, and magic circles, and ended by telling the place where he had hidden the horse.

"From this moment he was held in great esteem in the household of Sthuladatta.

"Not long afterwards a robbery was committed in the Palace of the King; jewels and gems were stolen, and gold carried away.

"The King, having heard of Harisarman, ordered him brought to the Palace, and said to him:

" 'I have heard of thy powers of divination; canst thou reveal to me the names of the wretches who have dared to enter my palace, and steal my treasures?'

"Harisarman was very much confused. He bowed low before the King and replied thus:

" 'Great King, All-powerful Master, thou hast taken me somewhat unawares. But thanks to my

great learning, no secret is hidden from my discerning eyes; I discover that which is invisible, and bring to light what others would desire concealed forever. Give me only till to-morrow, in order that I may place myself under the influence of the Stars.'

"The King had him conducted to a chamber in the Palace, with orders that he was to be permitted to pass the night alone.

"Now, the theft had been committed by a Maidservant of the Palace named *Dschiva* (the *Tongue*) and by her brother.

"Full of uneasiness, and fearing that the supposed Soothsayer would denounce her to the King, Dschiva crept on tiptoe to the chamber occupied by Harisarman, in the hope of overhearing something he might say. The false Soothsayer was as much frightened as she, and uttered loud imprecations on his *tongue* (*dschiva*) which had brought such trouble upon him.

"He cried out:

" 'Oh, *dschiva!* (*tongue*) what have you done through your stupid covetousness!'

"Dschiva imagined that these words were addressed to her; she entered the chamber and threw herself at the feet of Harisarman, confessed to him that she had stolen the jewels, implored him not to betray her, promising if he would be silent to bestow on him all the gold which had been taken, and to inform him where she had hidden the jewels.

"The next day Harisarman led the King to where the jewels were concealed, but the gold he kept for himself, and said to the King:

" 'Sire, the thieves in escaping carried with them the gold.'

"The King, well-pleased to have recovered his jewels, would have recompensed Harisarman, but was withheld by one of his Councillors, who said:

" 'All this does not look natural to me, oh, King. How can such learning be possessed by one who has never studied the holy texts? This affair has doubtless been arranged by Harisarman and the robbers. In order to convince *me* this pretended Soothsayer would have to be put to the test!'

"The King consulted for a few minutes with his Councillor, who then went out, and soon returned with a new earthen pot, which was covered by a lid, under which he had placed a live frog.

"The King, addressing Harisarman, said:

" 'If thou canst tell me what this vessel contains all honours shall be paid to thee, if not, thou shalt be put to death for having dared to deceive me!'

"Harisarman now gave himself up for lost. Memories, as vivid as lightning-flashes, passed through his mind. He remembered his happy childhood, and his kind father, and how the latter had a pet-name for him, and often would call him 'little Frog!' and, not thinking of what he was saying, but speaking to himself (with sufficient distinctness, however, to be heard), he exclaimed:

" 'Alas! alas! . . . this pot has caught thee, little Frog! Once thou wert free and happy, but now, how wilt thou escape?'

"All those who stood by and heard him sup-

posed that his words were addressed to the frog in the basin.

"The test seemed conclusive.

"From that day the King honoured Harisarman, loaded him with benefits, and made him a Prince. . . .

"This," said the Hermit, "is a story that shows how there is no justice in the world, and that we should be glad to leave it and seek a better one—even at the price of one's existence!"

"Oh, Holy Man," said Parvati, "the history of Harisarman is not finished; and who knows what may have happened to him afterwards? Perhaps he may have experienced a punishment all the more severe from having been delayed. And then he must have suffered from knowing himself to be other than he seemed! from knowing himself to be a liar and a thief, while he was saluted as a scholar and an honest man. . . . It seems to me that in this world we are always punished for our faults. Behold, what has happened to us to-day! Iravata, the wisest of elephants, for the first time acted without his usual prud-

ence; he went too far into the forest, and I, instead of restraining him, was delighted with the adventure, and encouraged him to go still further. We have both come near to losing our lives; then the storm overwhelmed us, and here we are, at the dead hour of the night, in the midst of this forest, fearfully far from the palace of Golconda—where, no doubt, my dear parents, distracted with anxiety, are lamenting the absence of their disobedient daughter!"

In saying this Parvati's beautiful eyes were full of tears, and as I listened I bent my head in shame, and wept, too.

"Do not despair," said the Hermit, who was looking closely at me; "the dangers you have encountered may perhaps have saved you from still greater perils. This Elephant, who has acquired the moral intelligence of humanity, knows very well to what I allude, and *he alone is to blame.*"

I trembled in all my members under the searching look he cast upon me, and understanding full well the meaning of his accusing words, my head sank lower and lower.

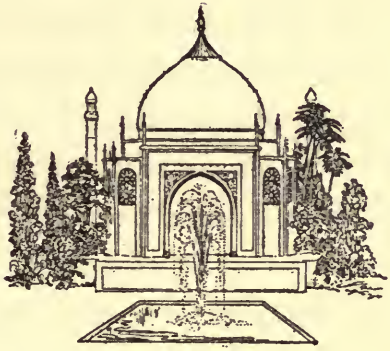
"Let this Elephant take warning," said he: "in approaching mankind through his sentiments and intelligence, he may also become liable to the errors of mankind. I foresee his future. I foresee that he will be unhappy, and that he will be the maker of his own misfortunes, through a sentiment far too human!" . . .

A long silence followed these prophetic words. Parvati was deeply moved, and as for me, I dared not raise my head.

I withdrew from the doorway which I had obstructed. And now a lovely moonlight, soft and bright, the colour of emeralds and turquoises, shone into the hut. The storm was over. The full moon had risen and beamed in the sky, where a few clouds still floated. The trees and the flowers, refreshed by the rain, filled the air with fragrance.

"Go now, my friends," said the Hermit; "the storm has been of service to you. Those who are waiting for you are not as anxious as they would otherwise have been; believing in the wisdom of the Elephant, in whom they have entire con-

fidence, they will suppose that he sought shelter from the storm, and that it alone has caused your delay. Go, then, the moon shines as bright as day. May the King and Queen of Golconda never learn the truth!" . . .



CHAPTER XX

DESPAIR

THANKS to the English who had interposed and had stopped the War, a Treaty of Peace had been signed between the Maharajah of Mysore and my master, the King of Golconda.

But, under an appearance of friendship, there still brooded a bitter enmity; and as a renewal of hostilities would have been the ruin of my master, who was less powerful than his enemy, a method was sought to confirm and strengthen the Treaty.

The plan decided upon was terrible—terrible for *me*—and brought about the catastrophe which the Hermit had foretold; and as he had predicted, I was the maker of my own misfortunes. . . .

Parvati all at once began to act strangely. A preoccupation which she did not impart to me absorbed her constantly, and I was unable to de-

cide whether she was happy, or sad. For hours at a time she would sit motionless, leaning back, gazing straight before her, her little hands clenched on the arms of her rattan chair.

I thought I could perceive that she was restless and impatient—as if expecting something; but she, who usually confided to me every thought, now was silent and reserved.

One day I saw her in the great Avenue of Tamarind Trees looking attentively at something which she held in the palm of her hand; she would lift it and bring it near—then hold it off at a distance, looking at it with half-closed eyes. She ended by letting her arms fall at her side, and bowing her head.

I drew near and saw that her eyes were full of tears. At this I uttered a little plaintive cry, and knelt before her, trying to make her understand how it pained me to be ignorant of that which was grieving her.

She understood me, and patting me gently with her hand, she made me rise.

"I am going to tell thee everything to-day, Ira-

vata," said she. "If I have been silent till now it was because I dreaded to announce things that might never come to pass; to speak of them seemed only to make them more real, and to bring them nearer. I had hoped that all would fade away, like the clouds which sometimes gather in the sky, and seem to threaten a tempest, but which yet disappear without bringing a storm. But now all is settled."

I trembled with anxiety on hearing her speak so sadly; she had seated herself on a bench of carved wood lacquered in red and gold, and she now continued, looking at the thing she held hidden in her hand:

"I am a Princess," said she. "Till lately I had supposed that this meant only that I was more powerful, more free, as well as richer than other mortals. I have learned that this is not all. There are duties which we owe to the people of whom we are the rulers, and our duty sometimes is to sacrifice our happiness to their welfare."

(The "happiness of the people!"—"sacrifice herself!" what was I about to hear?)

All at once she opened her hand and showed me a little picture set round with gold and diamonds:

"See this," said she, "it is a Prince—look well at it. . . . See this large, heavy face, this dark complexion, almost black under the white turban; see that thick mouth, and that bristling moustache, those long half-shut eyes, with such a sneering expression! It is not what one would imagine the face of a young Prince to be—and yet," added she, "it is no doubt flattered!"

She raised the picture to the level of my right eye, and I shut the other in order to see better.

So far as an elephant can judge of a likeness, and above all after the description she had given, it seemed to me the face of a terrible being—an enemy; and I hardly glanced at the picture when I was seized with a hatred of the person it represented, although I did not yet know how much reason I had to detest him.

"This Prince is named Baladji-Rao," said Parvati. "He is the Son of the Maharajah of Mysore, who at the time of my birth was making an

unjust war upon my father, and who would have put him to a shameful death, had you not rescued him, my Iravata. Well! behold how strange is the fate of princes! This Baladji, whose father strove to make me an orphan—is to be my husband—they are about to marry me to him, in order to cement more strongly the Treaty which has been signed, and preserve the peace of the two Kingdoms."

Marry her!

"The Prince has never seen me, and I am not acquainted with him; how can there be anything like friendship between us? But it is not, alas! a question of friendship—but of politics. I must sacrifice myself to the good of the State. To lament would be unworthy of my noble birth, and to appear sad would only distress my parents, who are delighted with the alliance."

I was thunderstruck. For a few moments I remained mute; but I could not control myself and very soon began to stamp and utter screams of distress.

"No . . . No! Iravata," cried she: "do not do

so; thy cries seem only to echo my own despair—and I am not willing to give it expression! I smother my grief in my heart, and force back my tears. I am resolved to be a truly Royal maiden, worthy of the long line of ancestors which form in history a brilliant chain, of which I am the last link. But they shall not separate thee from me. . . . That I will never allow!"

Not separate her from me when she was already so little with me! Ah! why could she not have remained a child, over whom I was permitted to watch? . . . To be together then was a pleasure for her, as much as for me! While now she was full of thoughts in which I had no part—taken up with amusements in which I counted for nothing. When she was married she would have a Court of her own, and a whole Palace to organize and direct—and what would become of me?

I was ashamed at thinking only of myself, and forgetting her sorrows; but a new feeling which I could not control had been aroused and was raging in me—a fury, and a savage hatred for

the stranger who was going to take my Princess away from me.

She forbade me to express my anguish, and it choked me. I had not, myself, any "royal" soul; I owed nothing to my "ancestors." I was only a beast of the forest, taught by my association with men to think, and to suffer; when I suffered I had to cry out; and since my Princess would not permit me to do so in her presence—I rushed away, and went, like a wounded animal, to lie and grieve on my bed in the stable!

CHAPTER XXI

JEALOUSY

He appeared one day at the Palace of Golconda—the enemy—the fiancé—whom I had already learned to detest.

When I saw him advancing from a distance, talking and laughing with Parvati, a red flame danced before me, and I closed my eyes to escape from the frenzy of rage which overwhelmed me at the sight of him.

I could hear them coming; the voice of the stranger reached my ears, resounded in them, and pierced them like a sharp arrow! On hearing it I seemed to see once more the bloody battlefield —the corpses crushed under my feet, and my Master in chains, and our perilous flight through the wilderness. . . .

A tremor shook me from head to foot. I lowered my head and kept my eyes obstinately shut, and I tore up the ground with my tusks to try and work off my fury.

I heard them coming nearer and nearer, she with her light step, and he dragging his feet along carelessly. He had seen me, and it was of me that he was speaking.

"Ah!" said he, "you have a white elephant! I know that a great veneration is felt for animals of this species in some countries—among others in Siam, the country of the Queen your mother. We, however, are less simple-minded, and we like them for processions, but value them less than the others because they are less robust."

Parvati had stopped near me, disturbed by my silent rage, which was plainly visible to her; she sought to soothe me with her gentle hand, and her voice shook as she replied to the Prince:

"Iravata is the good Genius of our family. The soul of one of my ancestors dwells in him, and he is my dearest friend!"

"Not dearer than your fiancé, I hope!" said he with a conceited laugh.

"He who has been devoted to me since my birth is more of a friend than the fiancé of yesterday. . . . "

"Why, this is serious!" cried Baladji, laughing still louder: "Must I really be jealous of a great beast like that?" . . .

I could no longer restrain myself from opening my eyes, and at the look that met his, the Prince recoiled several steps.

"By Kali," said he, "your Ancestor has not a very pleasant expression! his eyes are as ferocious as a tiger's!"

"Let us go on, I beg of you," said Parvati. "I do not know what has irritated him, but Iravata is not himself to-day."

"I will go on very willingly," said the Prince, endeavouring to conceal his fright, "for I detest the vicinity of elephants because of their odour!"

He turned and went away hurriedly, while Parvaṭi, before rejoining him, looked back at me, and clasped her hands supplicatingly.

It was well that he left, for I could no longer control myself; the idea of crushing him under my feet, and stamping him to a jelly had come over me, and in spite of the shame I felt at such a murderous impulse, I could not banish it.

CHAPTER XXII

FLIGHT

For several days after this Parvati did not come to visit me. I saw her at a distance, walking in the gardens, always accompanied by the black Baladji-Rao, whose white turban striped with gold showed brilliantly against the dark green shrubbery.

Perhaps the Princess intended to punish me for having shown myself so bitter and full of hatred, or perhaps she dreaded some outbreak of temper on my part; but her absence only embittered me still more, and my hatred increased for him who had deprived me of her presence, and the desire to murder him haunted me day and night.

The Palace was all in confusion with preparations for the wedding. They came to try on me a mantle of silver brocade embroidered with pearls and turquoise, a crown of feathers, and a

howdah of gold fillagree, in which the bridal couple were to be seated on the day of the marriage; for to me had been assigned the honour of carrying them in the great triumphal procession which was to traverse all Golconda.

But in proportion as the day approached my longing to kill the Prince increased to such intensity, that to avoid committing so fearful a crime, I took a painful resolution. . . . I resolved to leave the Palace—and to fly!

Leave Parvati! Leave the King and Saphire-of-Heaven! They who had made my life so sweet—so free—so happy! Go wandering about the world, exposed to whatever might befall me, and perhaps become once more a mere savage. . . . How could I endure such misfortune —such misery?

But I realized that I must sacrifice myself to prevent bringing a terrible catastrophe on those who had been so kind to me. Should Baladji-Rao be assassinated in Golconda, war would again be declared, fearful reprisals would be made, and my benefactors ruined. I had done

my best to curb my feelings, and resign myself to what I could not help; but a sight of the Prince of Mysore, no matter at what distance, caused a cloud of rage to mount to my brain which deprived me of reason, and impelled me irresistibly to destroy him.

I must go. I must give to my beloved Parvati this last proof of my devotion.

The night before the wedding I waited for the moon to set, and then I noiselessly opened the great door of my stable, and stole softly out.

For a moment I thought of going for a last time under the window of the Princess's chamber, and of gathering some lotus flowers and fastening them to her balcony, as I had often done before; that would have been a sort of "good-bye" and she would have understood. But my heart was heavy, and my eyes dim; I feared if I did so I might give way, and be unable to carry out my resolution, and leave. So, I crossed the courtyard quickly, lifted the bar and the chain on the gateway, and then, after fastening them once more to the best of my ability, I went forth.

A great silence rested everywhere on Golconda; all was dark and empty. My head hung down with shame and sorrow, and as I walked my big tears fell on the road, so that I could have been traced by them, if the dust had not at once dried them up!

The day was dawning when I drew near the forest which had so often been the goal of my excursions with the little Princess.

In those days, when the dusky outline of the trees and thickets shone out against the brilliant rose-colour of the sky, how delighted was I to entertain the laughing Princess with my gay frolics! And now, how sadly and mournfully was I seeking its somber shade! My breast swelled with hugh sighs—elephantine sighs—which escaped me with such terrible sounds that the beasts of the forest fled away, frightened.

I was so overcome that I was obliged to stop, and had I been a man I might, like the Court Poet, have put into verse the emotions of my heart, and the hoarse groans which burst from me could have been translated thus:

"Alas! I shall see thee no more, dearest Parvati!
Smile of my life, Sun of my days, Moon of my night!
I shall see thee no more . . . Alas!

"No more will thy soft hand stroke me!
Nor thy gentle voice speak the friendly words
That sounded sweeter to me than the sweetest music!

"But I leave thee to avoid committing a fearful crime.

"Thou, no doubt wilt soon have forgotten me.
Thou wilt always be the divine Princess Parvati,
Loved and blessed by all!
But I, deprived of thee,
Shall be only a poor wandering brute,
With naught to comfort me
But the remembrance of former happiness! . . ."

Yes, that is how the Poet would have lamented —and I also if I had not been an elephant!

I went on deeper and deeper into the forest, and the thought came to me of asking help of the good Hermit who had so kindly received us on

the day when I attempted to carry off the Princess, and when the serpent and the storm had brought me to repent of my wrong doing.

Certainly this pious old man, who had so long studied the lives of the Saints, and knew that one must be no less pitiful to animals than to human beings, would not repel me, and perhaps his comforting words would heal somewhat the sufferings which were too much for me.

As I advanced the woods seemed changed; the birds no longer sang, the flowers were pale and withered, and even the trees were brown and dying.

"It is because I myself am so sad," thought I at first; "that is the reason the forest seems so dreary; but by and by, when I shall have found the Hermit, and his words will have imparted to me a little courage, I shall hear the birds sing again, and see the flowers I used to gather for her!"

Alas! I was mistaken. Like myself the forest had really lost all its gayety; the birds would not sing, nor the flowers bloom any more. I

searched in every direction, but could not find the Hermit; at last I discovered, buried in the grass, a few half-decayed planks which alone remained to mark the spot where the hut had once stood. I saw that it had been abandoned, and left to be destroyed by the winds and the rain.

The good Hermit, with whom I had hoped to find a refuge, had left the forest; he had gone to seek another hermitage, or had taken up the life of a wandering mendicant, such as the Sacred Books sometimes ordain for Brahmans; or perhaps he might even be dead, killed by some ferocious tiger.

And so it was, that with him, all the joy and gladness had departed from the beautiful forest, which his presence no longer sanctified.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE HERD

If anything could have added to my wretchedness it would have been this failure to find the kind Hermit.

What was to become of me? accustomed as I had been for so long to living among men—petted and cherished by all?

Oh! why did no wise suggestion now come to me? Why did I not think of returning to the Palace of Golconda, where very likely my absence had not yet been discovered?

Alas! jealousy and murderous hatred still governed me; it was necessary that I should suffer and be punished; and the wise counsel which might have spared me so many trials never entered my head.

I wandered aimlessly through glades and thickets, penetrating desperately to the wildest parts of the forest. And now a new distress was

added to my misery. If I had, like men, the faculty of blushing, I would blush to say that hunger was now torturing me. I ought not, perhaps, at such a time to have given a thought to so commonplace a necessity as food; but, I repeat, our race supports less than any other the lack of nourishment; and, during my long life, I have seen so many men yield to the mere fear of hunger, that I trust I shall not be criticised too severely for my weakness.

I was, then, very sorrowful—and very hungry! I gathered here and there a few half-dead leaves, or a bunch of thin grass—but what could they do to sustain me? I was beginning to despair, when I heard in the distance a sound which I recognized as the trumpeting of elephants. This encouraged me. I said to myself:

"These Elephants whom I hear are, no doubt, Wild Elephants; still, I will try to touch their hearts, and, perhaps, seeing my distress, they will admit me to their Herd."

This thought inspired me with a little confidence, and I made my way towards that part

of the forest whence the sounds proceeded. They continued to reach me at intervals, and, guided in this way, I reached after a while an opening in the woods, in which twenty large Elephants were resting, reclining on the ground.

In the centre of the clearing was a great heap of fruits and fresh vegetables. (The Elephants are accustomed to separate at night, and go through the fields and near-by plantations, to forage for food, and they return bringing with them what they have been unable to eat, and make of it a common stock of provisions.)

I saw them quietly enjoying their repast; from time to time, one would extend his trunk and select a fruit or vegetable from the heap, and tranquilly munch it, as if quite sure that nothing would come near to disturb them, or to interfere with their meal.

Several were sleeping; and yet, in spite of the calm and peaceful appearance of these Elephants, one felt they were savage and ready to defend themselves fiercely against any intrusion. I trembled as I approached them!

I was thinking how I could best attract their attention, when one of them saw me, and with a hoarse cry, gave the alarm to his companions. Instantly those who had been eating stopped, and those who were asleep awoke. They all looked at me, and in those looks I could see no sign of sympathy for him who had disturbed them. I was on the point of taking flight—but hunger held me fast, and I said humbly, in elephant language, something like this:

"My Brothers, I am a very unfortunate and friendless creature, who has no wish to offend you. I have been for a long time wandering about, without food or shelter, and if you do not assist me I shall soon die of hunger. Have pity upon me! Give me a little of your provisions, and I will in return be glad to render you any service in my power!"

These words had no effect. They said to themselves:

"This is a *White* Elephant—and no doubt sick; at any rate he is not like us. Why should we allow him to come among us?"

"HE IS WHITE, AND THAT IS ALL THE MORE REASON FOR SENDING HIM OFF"

One Elephant, who was taller and more powerful than the others, and who seemed to be a leader among them, said roughly:

"We should never take in strangers. We should beware of all new-comers, and far from treating them with kindness, we should chase them away. Even if this Elephant were dark like us, he has no business here; he was not born in this clearing. He is *White*, and that is a still stronger reason for sending him off!"

At this all the Elephants cried out with one voice:

"Yes! Yes!—let him go!"

Then they all turned to me and cried:

"BEGONE! BEGONE! . . . "

I tried to speak again, but their cries became more fierce. Many rose up and threatened me with their tusks. Alone as I was against twenty Elephants—what could I do? . . . Then, too, my life among kindly and affectionate masters, and my occupation of watching over and serving the sweetest and gentlest of Princesses, had rendered me averse to fighting. . . . I did not like

quarrels. Their furious screams shocked and horrified me, and I left the clearing where for a moment I had hoped to find refuge.

I saw now that I had nothing to hope from my fellow-elephants. Everywhere it would be the same. I should be treated as an intruder. I remembered how, even in my infancy, when I lived in the forest of Siam, I had been looked on with dislike by my companions of the Herd, because of my white colour—the very thing that had caused me to be welcomed by men. How then would it be with strangers? even if less savage than those I had just left?

It would always be the same. . . . No herd would ever consent to receive me.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BRAHMAN

I REALLY knew not what to do, and my reflections grew more and more gloomy, when I noticed that I had by degrees wandered out from the forest, which now lay behind me.

A rich plain on which were fields and meadows and villages was before me, stretching out as far as the eye could see. A white road traversed this plain at some distance.

It was now twilight; the fields were deserted, and not a peasant was to be seen anywhere on the far-off road. I determined to reach this highway, however, for it certainly would lead me somewhere—probably to some city where I might be received. Cast out and rejected by my fellow-elephants, my only hope now rested on the kindness of men. . . .

As I was passing through a field of vegetables I could not resist the temptation of stealing a

few, and in this way appeasing to some extent my hunger.

Night had fallen when I gained the road. I set out to follow it, snatching a fruit now and then from the trees that bordered it.

I had gone but a short distance when my eye fell upon a dark object lying at the foot of the embankment. I went near, and looking closely, I saw that it was a man. . . . Was he dead?—or only asleep? . . . I sniffed at him, and felt the warmth of his breath—he was alive! I examined him still more closely; his clothing was ragged and stained with dust and mud. His appearance was that of a labourer, and yet, around his waist I noticed the "*cord*" which marked him as a Brahman. A Brahman in such rags might be one of those who sometimes adopt the life of a Beggar, in obedience to the precepts of their religion. His breath, however, recalled the odour of certain strong liquors, imported by the Europeans, some of which I had seen in bottles, and had smelt with disgust; This showed that he was not leading the life of abstinence suitable

for a Mendicant Brahman. He was, no doubt, one of those unfortunate Brahmans fallen into poverty and disgrace—"*Apad*," as it is called in the Indian language. The holy law permits these to labour at any kind of work, such as in ordinary circumstances would be entirely forbidden to their "caste."

After looking at him for a long time I was able to make out his features. He had not a cruel face. No doubt he would receive me gladly, and perhaps welcome me as a gift from the Gods! . . . I had been so long unused to being alone that I could not endure it. . . . A companionship here offered itself. . . . What would it be like? . . . I had no means of guessing; but even were the Brahman to prove the cruellest of masters, I felt that I would rather submit to be maltreated by him than to live alone.

I gave him a little blow with my trunk, to waken him. He opened his eyes, and stammered:

"Eh! . . . What's that?"

The night air, which had grown cold, now fully aroused him, and he saw me.

"What is this? Whose elephant is this? Can it be he who has waked me up, poking me with his trunk?—does he mean to hurt me, I wonder?"

He got up, painfully and with difficulty. I gave a few little supplicating whimpers, to show that, on the contrary, I was asking for his sympathy. Pretty soon he ceased to fear me.

"Well!" said he, "I do not know where you come from, but—bah!—that is none of my business! We should treat animals as kindly as human beings. It looks as if you wanted to make friends with me!" I bent my head in sign of assent, as I had seen men do.

"You seem very intelligent! I am only a poor unfortunate Brahman, in 'Apad,' obliged to accept the hardest sort of work in order to live, and to labour at tasks that are far beneath my rank. No doubt I am expiating sins committed in some former existence. But, follow me, if you choose! You shall share my poor living: and, perhaps, you may even prove useful to me; for one who owns an elephant can obtain more

lucrative employment than he who has only his strong arms and good-will to offer."

To show him that I accepted his proposal to live with him for the future, I bent my forefoot, inviting him to mount on my back. He understood, and climbed up, and when he had settled himself to the best of his ability, he said:

"Go ahead! Follow the road before you! Perhaps the Gods have sent you to me for my advantage! Choose your own way. I have neither house nor friends; anybody may receive us who will."

I was no longer alone; and in my forlorn condition this was a bit of good luck. I walked along the road, feeling less despondent, and carrying my new master.

This new master was called Moukounj. Many a time when we tramped long distances without finding any one who would give work to either or both of us, I would hear him talking to himself, and recounting his misfortunes, and I ended by knowing them by heart. His tale was simple enough. He belonged to a rich family of Brah-

mans, and had spent his youth at Lahore, where he had received instruction in all that it behoved a Brahman to know, at the hands of excellent masters. Later on the Rajah of the Mahrattas took him into his service as "*pourohita*"; the "pourohita" is a priest whom the princes employ to offer sacrifices to the Gods in their name. I have heard the English say that rich Europeans employ priests of their own religion to perform similar duties, and that they are called "*chaplains.*"

Moukounj was highly thought of by the Rajah of the Mahrattas, who treated him in the most friendly manner; and he might have risen to eminence and great honour, had it not been for a terrible fault. He could not resist the temptation of drinking strong liquors and was continually getting drunk. When intoxicated, he had several times been guilty of grave infractions of the Court etiquette, and in spite of the regard felt for him by the Rajah, he was dismissed.

This disgrace did not cure Moukounj of his weakness; on the contrary, he fell into the way

of drinking more and more. At last, avoided by everyone, turned out of every household, despised by the other Brahmans, he finally sank to beggary, and tramped about the country, thankful to take any sort of work that offered. He had been a Cook; he had been a Stone-mason—but everywhere his fault prevented him from remaining any length of time.

At present he was engaged most of the time in helping the Navvies and the Stevedores, and he lived on very meagre wages, the greater portion of which he spent for that yellow liquor which the Europeans call "*Eau-de-Vie*" ("*Water-of-Life*")—why I do not know, for it seems to me that, far from giving them *life*, it slowly kills them! . . .

Thanks to me, Moukounj was now a little better off; he hired me out to carry heavy burthens, and himself to carry light ones; and the coarse vegetables he bought to feed me cost but very little.

Our life was very monotonous. If we found ourselves in a city where Moukounj could not

find work—we left, and wandered on till we found something to do.

Moukounj was, on the whole, not a bad fellow—always ready to be useful where he could—the way he had received me was proof of this! He was jolly and good-natured, and loved to remember and recite the fine speeches he had learned at Lahore. But when drunk his disposition changed; he grew irritable; he became ugly and violently angry; he quarrelled with his fellow-workmen, and went so far as to beat me.

I certainly was not happy. When the work I was employed in seemed too humiliating, and when Moukounj lashed me with blows—I suffered bitterly. But why rebel? Things might be worse—so I submitted.

I thought constantly of my old life, wondering what had become of the lovely Parvati; did the Prince love her? . . . Was she happy? . . . Did she ever remember me? . . .

I tried to frame replies to these questions that would be as comforting as possible, and these thoughts softened somewhat my sorrows.

I never could tell you the names of all the cities we saw, all the rivers I crossed, the mountains I climbed with Moukounj. I remember one French city where I helped to build a palace for the Governor; I also carried the rails for a tramway they were building just outside of Madras. I did much other work of about the same kind, and I passed several years in this wandering and monotonous existence.

CHAPTER XXV

THE IRON RING

We wandered on, going from village to village, from town to town, from city to city, till we finally reached Calcutta. And here my life was once more changed.

It happened in this way.

We had been stopping a long time in this great city, where Moukounj was always able to find work for us both. The English language which he had learned in his youth was often of great advantage to him here.

We had been working for several days on the wharves, where we were employed in unloading vessels. The heaviest burthens were as nothing to me, and Moukounj was alert and insinuating, and so was able to render a thousand little services to the travellers and also to the sailors. He was now earning a generous living for us; but alas! it only resulted in more frequent and

more furious fits of drunkenness for him—and for me in blows and humiliations.

It often happened that he went off to drink at the neighbouring taverns, and left me alone to stand and await his return—he knew very well that I would be faithful!

Now, one day we had been helping to unload the cargo of a large merchantman, and Moukounj had left me a few vegetables to eat, and had gone off to drink, when there came in, at the same wharf, a large Liner, bringing a great many passengers. I was distressed that my master should miss a chance to gain so many rupees —but I felt it would be useless to go in search of him. The wisest way would be to wait patiently for his return, and that was what I did. Moukounj *might* return in time—I could only hope he would not be drunk!

I watched the passengers as they disembarked. They were Europeans, mostly English, who ran about, here and there, asking questions of the porters, not making themselves understood, nor understanding what was said to them. The spec-

tacle amused me greatly, and I watched them closely, trying to imagine from their looks what each one would do. . . . It was not long before I remarked among them a group of persons whose calmness contrasted with the agitation of the others. They numbered something like twenty; there were about as many women as men; all were young, and well dressed. It did not seem that the voyage had fatigued them; they stood together on the wharf, taking but little notice of their surroundings.

One of them now quietly reviewed the company, and, seeing that none of them were missing:

"We may as well go to the Hotel," said he to his companions.

Then, addressing one of the young men, he said:

"Mr. Oldham, you will please remain here and see to the unloading of our baggage."

"Yes, Mr. Hardwick, I will do so," replied he. Then all except Mr. Oldham went quietly off.

I looked curiously at this Mr. Oldham; he was

a most singular young man—tall and thin, with very long arms and legs, and enormous hands. His head was small, his mouth stretched from ear to ear, and his cheek-bones projected strangely. While waiting for the luggage to be landed, Mr. Oldham strode up and down, seemingly impatient, and murmuring something to himself which I did not understand.

I was in despair at Moukounj's absence. These strangers, thought I, must have a lot of baggage, perhaps very heavy, and if my master were here we would get plenty to do.

While thinking about it I was playing mechanically with a great ring of iron which lay at my feet. It had once been fastened into the ground, but it was no longer secure, and in playing I had unintentionally loosened it. I was now amusing myself by tossing it up in the air, and catching it on my trunk as it fell.

All at once the eyes of Mr. Oldham turned in my direction, and he began to watch me closely. My play seemed to interest him, and he called one of the workmen on the wharf, and inquired:

"Do you know who is the owner of that elephant?"

"Oh, yes," said the man, "it is a poor fellow who works here at unloading ships."

"He has got a very intelligent animal!"

That was all.

But Mr. Oldham continued to look at me; and as for myself, my vanity being awakened, I made a point of not missing a single ring, and Mr. Oldham gave vent to "Ohs!" and "Ahs!" of admiration, and murmured:

" '*The Elephant Juggler*'—That would look well on our play bills!"

They now began to bring ashore the luggage of Mr. Oldham and his friends.

There were enormous boxes and crates of strange shapes, bales of rope, stacks of poles, and many things scarcely covered at all, of which I could not imagine the use. Then they brought up out of the ship great chariots, cages of wild animals, and at last numbers of horses, who seemed bewildered by the voyage.

Well, these are strange travellers, thought I—

and they have strange luggage! They loaded the boxes and bales onto the chariots, and harnessed to them the least fine-looking of the horses; a number of men, who seemed to be the servants of Mr. Oldham, took the horses by the bridle, or mounted on the chariots, and all were moving off, when Moukounj arrived!

He was not very drunk, and he went at once to Mr. Oldham to offer his services. It was too late. But as he pointed towards me, Mr. Oldham said to him:

"Ah! You are the owner of that intelligent beast? You had better come to the Hotel Victoria, and ask for Mr. John Hardwick, Director of the '*Grand Circus of the Two Worlds*'—he may have something to say to you that will be to your advantage."

And Mr. Oldham went off with the chariots and baggage.

At first Moukounj never thought of going to see Mr. John Hardwick. He could not understand what the Director of the "*Circus of the Two Worlds*" could have to say to him. But fate

ordained that for the next two days we had almost no work, and were reduced to the verge of starvation. It was then that he remembered Mr. Oldham's invitation. He thought that even if Mr. Hardwick had nothing of importance to propose, he might at least take pity on him, and give him a little something in charity.

So, having warned me—a useless precaution—to remain patiently where I was, he set off for the Victoria Hotel.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE GRAND CIRCUS OF THE TWO WORLDS

In about an hour Moukounj returned, joyous, and as he came near me he embraced my trunk.

"Ah! my brave companion! My faithful friend! How great is the wisdom of the Sage who says: *'He who is clever will be a stranger in no country; for him who is contented with little, there is no anxiety; for him who is wise, there are no surprises; for him who is determined, nothing is impossible!'*—How true are these sayings! And equally so is this one: *'The life of mankind is as uncertain as the reflection of the Moon on water; for this reason we must practise Virtue!'* . . . Yes—yes—we must practise Virtue; and it is because I have done so, and because I have so cheerfully endured my misfortunes, that to-day the Gods have sent me better luck!"

He ceased speaking, and danced around me, clapping his hands. Then he resumed:

"Yes, yes, old fellow! life is, indeed, as uncertain as the reflection of the Moon on water. When I was young and was studying books of wisdom at Lahore, I would have laughed at anyone who told me that I would one day be employed in unloading ships on the wharf at Calcutta; and yesterday I would have laughed at him who said that to-day I should belong to the troupe of Mr. John Hardwick, Director of the *'Grand Circus of the Two Worlds'*—and nevertheless—that is what has happened!"

He hugged me again, and continued:

"Oh, my friend! My saviour! thou, who, for all I know, may be Ganesa Himself! . . . Henceforth, we shall have a sure refuge! We will no longer have to sleep in a ditch by the roadside on rainy nights. . . . We will not have to go hungry! No! we shall live in comfort, well-paid, and fed by the kind Mr. John Hardwick. . . . Good Fortune has found us at last!" And thereupon he told me of his interview.

"I went to the Hotel Victoria," said he; "I asked for Mr. John Hardwick, and was shown

into the presence of a man, still young, but of so serious and grave an appearance that I felt timid and embarrassed—I who had never before felt fear! (For, what says the Sage? *'In the forest, in the jungle, on perilous roads, in fierce encounters, and in troubles, under the threatenings of swords—Virtuous men feel no fear!'*) Mr. Hardwick had with him the young man who spoke to me the other day, whom he called Mr. Oldham. On seeing me this young man said:

" 'Ah! this is the man I spoke to you about, who has the clever elephant.' And he began at once to sound your praises, talking about something which I could not quite understand; he spoke continually of an 'iron ring' with which he had seen you playing. . . .

"Mr. Hardwick then asked if I would sell you.

" 'I?—Sell an elephant sent to me by the Gods . . . who perhaps is a God himself? . . . Never!—Never!' said I.

" 'That is a pity,' said Mr. Oldham: 'for this elephant would undoubtedly be a great addition to the attractions of our company.'

" 'Well, it cannot be helped,' said Mr. Hardwick.

"I was about to retire when Mr. Oldham signed to me to remain, and addressing Mr. Hardwick, said:

" 'Perhaps matters might be arranged in a way that would be satisfactory to all. How would it do to engage both the elephant and his master?'

" 'Give me five minutes to think,' said Mr. Hardwick. Oh! there is a man who knows how to make up his mind in a hurry! The five minutes being ended, Mr. Hardwick turned to me and asked:

" 'Will you agree to form, with your elephant, a part of our Troupe?'

"As for me I had no need to ask time for reflection; it took me but a minute to make up my mind, and accept! . . . To tell the truth, I did not exactly understand in what way Mr. John Hardwick was expecting to employ us; but he seemed to be a man of wealth, who would at any rate provide us with a living. So I said, 'Yes.' And I do not think that I shall regret it."

And once more, singing and laughing, he capered around me. Then, all at once becoming serious, he added:

"Mr. Oldham later on told me something of Mr. Hardwick's business. It seems he exhibits trained animals; and the members of his company perform feats of strength and skill. So now, my friend, in place of toiling and exhausting yourself in hard work, you have only to amuse the public with your accomplishments—and we shall never know want again!"

I must confess I was not so delighted as my master. Although I had been glad to divert dear ones like Saphire-of-Heaven and Parvati, I felt very disinclined to entertain those to whom I was indifferent. My present life was certainly hard enough, but at least it afforded me an opportunity to indulge my regrets; while I understood that I would be called upon to be gay at stated times, even if the most melancholy thoughts were at the moment distressing me. However, I could not spoil the happiness of Moukounj, and I responded in a friendly manner.

We soon left the wharf, and went to join Mr. John Hardwick. And thus it was that I entered the company of "*The Grand Circus of the Two Worlds.*"

That evening Mr. Hardwick introduced us to his Troupe. He had hired a large vacant space on which his circus was encamped; it was a great framework of wood and iron, which could be set up and taken down very quickly. When put together it presented a very elegant and comfortable appearance, and no one would suppose that only a few hours would be required to take it apart and pile it on the chariots. It was arranged in two sections—the Circus proper with the Ring and the Benches, and the Stables, with rooms where the grooms and inferior employees of the company were accommodated; the important members lodged at the Hotel, with the Director. When we reached the Circus, Mr. Hardwick designated the place I was to occupy in the Stable, and the room which Moukounj (who refused to allow anyone else to look after me) was to share with one of the grooms.

We were then conducted to the Ring, where all the company were assembled. They were the very persons whom I had seen arriving three days before.

The Director then made a speech, as follows:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, allow me to introduce to you Monsieur Moukounj and his Elephant. My valued friend and assistant, Mr. Oldham, informs me that this Elephant is a remarkable animal, whom he has seen execute a difficult and interesting exercise without any previous instruction. As a member of our Troupe, he will do honour to our Company, already so celebrated. I bespeak, therefore, a kind reception for the *Elephant* and his *Master*."

The Company came forward very politely, one after another, to greet Moukounj, and to caress me; and Mr. Hardwick, addressing Moukounj, introduced each one by name.

"This, Monsieur, is Mr. Oldham, with whom you are already acquainted. He is our Premier Clown, and Stage Manager.

"This is Mr. Edward Greathorse, our Ring-

master, and his wife, one of the most distinguished Equilibrists in the world, and their two children, Master William Greathorse, who has not his equal for vaulting through a paper circle, and coming down plumb in the right spot on his horse—and Miss Annie Greathorse, who has made a study of the Trapeze, and has acquired all the secrets of that difficult art."

Mr. and Mrs. Greathorse did not please me at all. Mr. Greathorse was a very tall, thin man of about forty; one felt at once that he was in the habit of speaking only to horses—and of speaking to them brutally! Mrs. Greathorse was about the same age as her husband, and quite as tall. She was as fat as he was thin; her vulgar face had a look of hardness, and her nose was extraordinarily flat. The reason of this I learned later on; it was occasioned by her specialty of balancing upon that feature a pole with a heavy iron ball on the end!

Master Greathorse, who might have been about seventeen or eighteen years old, displeased me excessively; he had a sly look, and seemed to

enjoy nothing so much as playing malicious jokes at the expense of the other members of the company. The only one of the family who attracted me was Miss Annie. She was a very young girl, almost a child, not over fifteen at the outside, and very fragile, with arms developed out of all proportion by her exercise on the trapeze. It was easy to see that she worked too hard and was a sufferer; she had a pale, gentle face and fair, pretty hair.

After the Greathorses there advanced six persons, all wonderfully alike, although their ages varied from nine or ten to thirty-five years.

"The Smith Brothers, Monsieur," said Mr. Hardwick: "most interesting gentlemen!—Until you have seen them form the 'Human Pyramid,' you do not know to what heights the Acrobatic Art has attained!"

The "Smith Brothers" all smiled at once, with the same smile, which seemed to have coagulated and become a fixture upon their lips.

The next to come forward was a very pretty and elegant young woman:

"Miss Clara Morley, our accomplished 'Amazon'—you will have an opportunity to admire her in her clever equestrian exercises."

After Miss Morley came three men and three women, none of them either fat or thin, tall or short, handsome or ugly—but all very well dressed and civil.

"Our Riders, Mr. and Mrs. Crampton, Mr. and Mrs. Bampton, and Mr. and Mrs. Mapton."

Mr. Hardwick next presented:

"Mr. Nilo Bong, the famous Gymnast from Tonquin—the Ulverstone Sisters, Miss Jane and Miss Lucy Ulverstone, who every evening, Monsieur, astonish and delight the audience by their dexterity on the Horizontal Bar.

"Mr. Pound—to whom the lifting of a two-hundred pound weight is a mere joke, and Mrs. Pound, his wife, the '*Fairy of the Revolver*'—at 100 feet she would not miss a nut! . . .

"Mr. Tom Liverpool, the Champion Pugilist, whom no one has ever been able to vanquish!

"Miss Alice Jewel, who crosses the Ganges at its widest part on a Wire!" . . .

All these people I found uninteresting and insignificant. Mr. Nilo Bong might call himself a Chinese, and his eyes were a little oblique, but his complexion proved him to be a European; Mr. Pound and Mr. Liverpool were huge men, but very unintelligent in appearance; Mrs. Pound was a small woman—very thin, with a sharp expression; Miss Jane and Miss Lucy Ulverstone were modest, well-mannered young women, who bowed politely.

There remained to be introduced only four more persons, two men, and two women.

The two men were strikingly alike, and both bore a singular resemblance to Mr. Oldham; but the features which in him were merely quaint and amusing, were in them so exaggerated as to be grotesque; and the oddity of their appearance was increased by an affected air of extreme gravity.

When their turn came to be introduced, and I

"Mr. Trick and Mr. Trock, Monsieme public

Mr. Hardwick: "I should not hesita

them the most brilliantly amusing C

hat he came

world, if they themselves did not recognize their superior in Mr. Oldham . . . they are Gaiety's favorite children!" . . .

Messrs. Trick and Trock bowed to Moukounj, and a very handsome young woman with black eyes and golden hair approached:

"Miss Sarah Skipton, Monsieur—the divine Artiste to whom we owe the '*Dance of Light.*' "

Miss Sarah Skipton bowed pleasantly, and last of all Mr. Hardwick presented a young girl who seemed to me the very embodiment of grace—with hair of delicate blond, and blue eyes that were a smile in themselves.

"Miss Sarah Skipton is, one may say, the Star of our Troupe; Miss Circé Nightingale is the Pearl! She is the gentle '*Charmer of Birds*,' and when you see her surrounded by her escort of warblers and nightingales, you would take her [illegible]ne of your divine Goddesses! . . ."

"Mr. Circé Nightingale smiled graciously on whom no[illegible]j, and caressed me with her pretty hand

"Miss A[illegible]ime—for which I thanked her, feeling its widest p[illegible]we were friends.

To sum up, all these people, with the exception of Mr. and Mrs. Greathorse, young Greathorse, and Mrs. Pound, seemed fairly agreeable, and I felt that it ought not to be particularly unpleasant to live with them. For four of them I already felt a certain sympathy; the elegance of Miss Clara Morley pleased me; she seemed so gentle with animals, and it was evidently not by severity that she managed her horses. For Miss Annie Greathorse I felt a sincere pity; I was sure that she was unhappy and badly treated, and thought that perhaps the time might come when I would be able to protect her. I admired the radiant beauty of Miss Sarah Skipton, and the exquisite grace of Miss Circé Nightingale delighted me; and I said to myself: "I shall have here four Friends—and four Enemies!"

When the Troupe had all been introduced, Mr. Hardwick said to Moukounj:

"This is our first evening in Calcutta, and I would like to present your elephant to the public as soon as possible; what is his name?"

"As it was at a time of distress that he came

to me, from I know not where, and as he brought me consolation—I call him 'Devadatta,' which in our language signifies 'Sent-by-the-Gods.' "

"Very good! We will then call him on our bills, '*The Famous Elephant Devadatta*' . . . But, tell me, is there not one of your gods whom you represent with the head of an elephant?"

"The Divine Ganesa, God of Wisdom, has an elephant's head," replied Moukounj.

"Excellent!" cried Mr. Hardwick: "'*The Famous Elephant Devadatta, Brother of Ganesa, in his various Acts*'—that is the thing! What do you think of that, Mr. Oldham?"

"It will be admirable," replied Mr. Oldham.

"Now," continued Mr. Hardwick, "we must decide what exercises to teach him. You are the one who discovered him, and it is to you that I shall confide his education."

"I feel honoured, Mr. Hardwick," said Mr. Oldham; "his lessons will not take long, and will be commenced at once. But first, I would like to have him repeat before you the game with which he was amusing himself on the wharf."

Mr. Oldham ordered the Iron Ring to be brought, and I understood that I was to play with it as I had done before. Mr. Hardwick was satisfied.

"That is very well," said he, "and if he could play with several at a time it would be perfection."

Some more Rings were brought; I threw them all into the air and caught them all on my trunk, I did not miss one. And Mr. Hardwick was enthusiastic.

CHAPTER XXVII

MY DEBUT

THE next day the play-bills of the "*Grand Circus of the Two Worlds*" bore the following announcement:

ELEPHANT JUGGLER

The Famous "Devadatta"

Brother of Ganesa

When the evening arrived, and the performance was about to begin, I was not much excited —but terribly ashamed. I thought, "What would Parvati say if she could see me? I am about to amuse an audience by ridiculous tricks; and if I should be so unlucky as to let slip a ring, no doubt I shall be punished! Mr. Oldham, it is true, has a fairly good-natured face, but Mr.

Greathorse might make himself very disagreeable—and no doubt threaten me, as he does the horses, who at the moment were making the tour of the Ring."

The performance began by an Equestrian Act, by Messrs. Crampton, Hampton, and Bampton. The horses were expected to leap over various obstacles, and as I stood near the door, I could see Mr. Greathorse in the centre of the Ring, with an enormous whip in his hand, cutting the air with slashing strokes, to excite the poor creatures, and when one of them, in spite of the efforts of the rider and the cracking of the lash, hesitated to jump, he looked as if he would have been glad to proceed from threats to blows!

After the Cramptons, the Hamptons, and the Bamptons, the Ulverstone Sisters appeared; but while the bar was being placed in position three singular persons bounded into the Ring—one turning handsprings, one walking on his hands, and the other disjointing himself in a series of summersaults. They were dressed in a large, loose garment, made all in one piece, and deco-

rated with strange patterns; one had a rising sun painted in the middle of his back and on his stomach, and one had an enormous frog. All had their faces whitened with flour, and wore wigs of white or red with a long lock standing up at the crown. . . . They amused the public by all sorts of extravagances; they exchanged buffets with each other; threw themselves down on the ground, and jumped up suddenly. . . . They pretended to assist the servants who were adjusting the bar, and perpetually tumbled down in the most grotesque attitudes. The public laughed loudly at their antics.

I looked very earnestly at these persons, and I finally discovered underneath the flour the features of Mr. Trick, Mr. Trock—and Mr. Oldham! I was greatly astonished, and somewhat shocked to have for my Preceptor a gentleman who could so forget his dignity!

Between each number of the program Mr. Oldham, and Messrs. Trick and Trock repeated their buffooneries.

The performance went along very well. The

praises with which Mr. Hardwick had showered his companions in introducing us seemed to me well merited. The Smith Brothers were wonderfully agile; if Mrs. Greathorse was unpleasant to live with, she was a most adroit Equilibrist; Miss Alice Jewel was extremely successful on the Tight-rope. The Riders did well, and I was charmed with the graceful movements of Miss Clara Morley's horse, which she managed altogether by kind words. Only poor Annie Greathorse awakened my pity—she seemed so ill at ease on her Trapeze!

It was after her that the "Famous Devadatta" was to appear. And I appeared. I was applauded, and on my return from the Ring was kindly received and caressed by the members of the company. But I was far from happy; the least notice from Parvati would have been sweeter!

The end of the representation pleased me more than all the rest; it was finished by the trained Birds of Miss Circé Nightingale, and the "*Dance of Light*," by Miss Sarah Skipton.

They brought a great Cage into the middle of the Ring, full of all kinds of Birds singing most delightfully. Then Miss Circé appeared, looking charming in a dress of pale blue, with a silver girdle around her waist; a silver comb sparkled in her beautiful blond hair; she held in her hand a silver flute. She went at once to the Cage, opened the door, and all the Birds flew out and circled round her, and some perched on her shoulder. She smiled upon them in a sweet, friendly way, and at a little gesture from her, they all flew up to the ceiling of the Circus. She then played on the flute, and the Birds accompanied her, and one could not distinguish the song of the Birds from the notes of the flute.

Then she hastened the time of the music and the Birds descended towards her, and circled around her head, like a kind of living coronet. . . . She constantly altered the measure of the music ,and the Birds who were familiar with it formed new figures—all of them most beautiful; and one might have imagined the lovely *Bird Charmer* to be a *Queen of Air!*

And when the flute ceased Miss Circé's gay little friends went joyously back into their Cage, and the delighted audience applauded with enthusiasm.

Where the Cage had stood they now brought in and set up a large platform, on which Miss Sarah Skipton mounted, dressed in a very full gown of thin, light material, made with an extraordinary number of flounces or plaits; her beautiful golden hair floated over her shoulders. Then the lights were put out: only four great lamps, or rather lanterns, were left, which shed their rays directly onto the platform, surrounding Miss Sarah with a luminous aureole. Then they passed before the lanterns coloured glasses, and among these reflections, which changed each instant, Sarah danced. . . . She danced quick and light, or slow and languid; her dress whirled around her, and grew red—green—yellow—and violet in turn—and sometimes all the colours of the rainbow at once. She seemed a flower—a butterfly—a bird; she was the dawn; she was the twilight; she was the storm, with flashes of light-

ning; she was the waves of the sea, smiling in the morning light; she was precious stones—and last of all—the glorious triumphant Sun! . . . And suddenly all the lights were turned on, and Sarah received the acclamations of the Audience in triumph!

The performance was over. I modestly retired to my stable, quite dazzled by the "*Dance of Light.*"

CHAPTER XXVIII

COMEDIAN

Soon a new announcement could be read on the bills of the "Circus of the Two Worlds."

The Celebrated
DEVADATTA
Unique Elephant
Brother of
THE DIVINE GANESA
In His Various Acts

Mr. Oldham had certainly acquitted himself remarkably well and rapidly, with my education, and I now no longer delighted the public by merely juggling with rings. I performed at each representation, always in the same order of succession, and when my repertoire was completed, this is what I did.

First, I tossed the rings; then a target was placed, and I stood before it, with a basket of balls beside me. I picked up the balls with my trunk, and threw them at the target—and I believe I never missed.

The target being removed, a huge ball of iron was brought to me, and I stood upon it with my four feet, balancing myself, and moving slowly forward. This exercise fatigued me excessively; so, to afford me a rest, I was made to play a *Dramatic Scene.*

A young King and a beautiful young Queen were supposed to be travelling happily in the country. All at once sounds of the hunt are heard; I appear—chased by horsemen; the young King and Queen try in terror to hide themselves; I pretend to be enraged, and run furiously two or three times round the Circus. Then I see the Queen, and rush towards her. Then, in the Scene as originally composed by Moukounj—(for my master had become an author, in order to increase the brilliancy of my theatrical career), the King should strive to protect the

Queen with his person, draw his sword, and bury it in my breast, and I should fall, apparently dead. The sword, of course, had a blade of tin, which slipped up inside the handle. But this finale was changed by me after the first evening.

It was Miss Nightingale who played the young Queen. She was most lovely in this part, with a robe of delicate white gauze under which glistened a tunic of mauve silk. And when I saw her, looking so beautiful, the memory of Parvati, which never left me, came over me more vividly and tenderly than ever before; so that, instead of rushing violently upon her, I stopped; and then came forward slowly, and humbly and submissively—knelt at her feet! The audience applauded tremendously, and it was decided to retain this denouement for the Scene hereafter.

After this, I made the circle of the Ring five times on a Bicycle, an enormous Bicycle built for my stature. (You can imagine with what difficulty an elephant could balance himself on such a machine!) I worked the pedals with my forefeet and steered with my trunk.

Next, I had to stand up and dance a Polka; and, finally, I had to play another Dramatic Scene—a *Comedy*, composed by Mr. Oldham.

They brought into the middle of the Circus a Table and a Chair of the proper size for me. Then a couple of uprights, between which hung a bell, with a cord attached.

I entered, sat down in the chair, and with my trunk pulled the bell-cord. Instantly, Mr. Oldham, dressed like a Waiter, ran in. I made him understand that I wished my dinner.

"Yes, Mr. Elephant—it will be ready immediately!"

He went out. Then I drew from a bag fastened around my waist a pair of enormous spectacles, and put them on. Then I took a newspaper and pretended to read—(though at that time I did not really know how to read!) After a while, as Mr. Oldham did not return, I pretended to grow impatient, and rang again, and Mr. Oldham ran in:

"Yes, Mr. Elephant. . . . Your dinner will be ready in a few minutes!"

Twice more I rang, and twice Mr. Oldham ran in and repeated the same thing, "Yes, Mr. Elephant, your dinner will be ready in a few minutes"—without bringing me anything. The third time he brought me merely one dish, which contained nothing but a few rolls, and I swallowed them in one mouthful.

I rang again and Mr. Oldham appeared; I signified that I wished something more. After a long while he brought me a second dish, with a few vegetables, which I ate up as quickly as the first. I ordered another dish, and this time he brought me fruits, cakes, and a bottle of Champagne, which I popped loudly!

I now rang for the last time, and signed that I desired my bill. Without waiting a moment this time, Mr. Oldham brought me an enormously long piece of paper. I put on my spectacles, having taken them off to eat. I looked at the bill, and gave a deep roar of indignation. Mr. Oldham fell to the ground as if terror-stricken, and bounded up again:

"What is the matter, Mr. Elephant?"

I expressed my displeasure by tearing the bill, and getting up and stamping on it.

"You think it is too much?"

I made a sign that I did.

"But you must pay it!"

I signified that I would not.

"What! You will not pay me?"

I continued to signify "No."

"Very well! Mr. Elephant, we will see about that!" and he called out:

"Hi! there! Police! Police!"

Then entered Mr. Trick and Mr. Trock, dressed as Policemen.

"Policemen!" said Mr. Oldham, "here is Mr. Elephant who refuses to pay my bill!"

"Oh, very well! we will arrest you, Mr. Elephant, and take you to the Station House," said Mr. Trick.

"Yes! Off with him to the Station House!" said Mr. Trock.

At this threat I appeared to be very much agitated, and, using my trunk, I drew out of my bag a number of imitation bank notes, which I threw

down on the table—and went hastily out, while Mr. Oldham performed an extravagant and burlesque dance of triumph with Mr. Trick and Mr. Trock. . . .

This scene always delighted the public, who invariably encored me two or three times. But I felt humiliated at playing the part of a buffoon, and making a clown of myself.

I lived in this way for several years; when the receipts fell off in any city, Mr. Hardwick took us to another. We went from Calcutta to Chandernagor, from Chandernagor to Patna; then I saw Benares, Alahabad, Delhi, and other places.

I need not have been very unhappy. I had made myself respected by those who at first attempted to tease me. Mr. Oldham was proud of his pupil and loved me; Moukounj was always the same good, kind fellow who had received me; and my four friends, Miss Annie, who, I had occasionally protected from her mother's violence, Circé Nightingale, Miss Sarah Skipton, and Miss Clara Morley were always kind and spoiled me incessantly.

But, alas! I thought constantly of my beautiful life of other days—so calm—so happy; and I thought of Parvati, who perhaps was sad and ill-treated, and whom I might have defended. Had she forgotten me? Or, if she thought of me, must she not accuse me of ingratitude? And, had I not been indeed ungrateful, to leave her as I did, because of a wicked jealousy? . . .

So, in spite of all the kindness by which I was surrounded, I was very, very sad.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE RETURN TO PARADISE

ONE day the "*Grand Circus of the Two Worlds*" arrived at Bombay. I was by this time at the end of my endurance—overwhelmed by mortification. . . .

I, the "King-Magnanimous," before whom a whole nation had prostrated itself—I, the fierce warrior, who had shed the blood of the enemy, restored a King to his throne, and had been the loved companion of the most beautiful of Princesses—to be reduced to exhibiting myself in grotesque parades to astonish and amuse the public! . . .

Ah! how hard life seemed to me! How lonely I felt among these new companions, in spite of their kind treatment of me!

As I was never to see Parvati again—never return to my lost paradise—why should I prolong my sufferings?

I determined to once more go away, and to seek in the depths of the wild forests the elephants' Burial Place, and there let myself die of hunger, among the whitening bones of my mates.

Yes, this evening's performance should be the last.

When all would be asleep, I would quit my wooden shed; I would swim across the narrow channel that separates the island of Bombay from the main land, and go to find the resting-place where all my griefs would die with me.

I was so preoccupied with the resolve I had taken, and the thoughts it awakened, that I paid little attention to the extraordinary activity which reigned that evening among the artists of the "*Grand Circus of the Two Worlds.*"

Costumes were being repaired, the accessories furbished up; familiar acts were being rehearsed with an altogether unusual care; and they were even sewing in great haste a gold fringe onto a drapery of red velvet—for what purpose I could not imagine.

The performance began much later than usual. It was delayed as much as possible, in spite of the impatient stampings of the public.

When I entered the Ring I saw, facing the entrance, a great space separated from the rest by railings painted red; the front of this improvised box was covered by a drapery of red velvet fringed with gold, and ornamented with the Arms of England, and garlands of flowers. Arm chairs were placed inside.

I knew at once that they expected some distinguished person; but he had not yet arrived, for the box was empty, and made a great dark gap in the midst of the other seats, which were all filled to overflowing by a brilliant audience, gaily dressed.

Mr. Oldham had been obliged, unwillingly, to begin my performance, and I was engaged in balancing on the Rolling Ball, when a general movement of the audience led me to know that the illustrious Personage had arrived.

Being careful not to lose my balance, it was impossible to look up to see who it might be:

"It is most likely the President of Bombay," thought I, and I cared nothing to see him.

But all at once the Ball rolled out from under my feet, I lost my balance, and fell on my knees. . . . A woman's voice had cried:

"Iravata!"

Who could call my name of other days? . . . my name of happiness? And the voice—that voice so sweet and musical, which penetrated me like a sword, cast me onto my knees, and sent all the blood to my heart! . . . It could be no voice but hers—her own voice! I was sure of it, and yet I dared not look—it seemed as if mistaken I should die!

The audience, surprised and respectful, kept perfectly still; and the voice, grown sad this time, spoke again:

"Have you forgotten me altogether, Iravata?"

In one bound I was on my feet, and before the box, which was just my height, and through tears of joy I beheld Parvati, as if through flames of fire. . . . She caressed me—kissed me—caring nothing for the crowds who looked on in amaze-

"OH, IRAVATA! IRAVATA!" SHE SAID IN A LOW VOICE

ment. . . . And I! no human being, even, could have expressed what I felt, and I was more than ever ashamed of the hoarse cries, and the stampings that were the only means I possessed of expressing a joy that took my breath away.

"Ah! Iravata—Iravata!" said she in a low voice, close to my ear: "Thou couldst leave me at such a trying time in my life? . . . I saw well enough that thou didst not give thy consent to my marriage; no doubt thou hadst read the soul of the Prince—and it did not please thee! Thy wisdom certainly saw his nature clearly; but thou shouldst have done as I did—resign thyself, and submit to fate, instead of abandoning me—ungrateful as thou wert—because of *jealousy!* I knew thou wert jealous—and I read the death of the Prince in thy looks of rage! If it was to avoid committing a crime that thou didst leave Golconda, I must forgive thee, in spite of the pain thou hast caused me. Thou mayest return now—for the Prince is no more!"

What I did on hearing these happy tidings was certainly not proper, for I have been in-

structed that it is not right to rejoice at the death of any one . . . but I could not help it! *I ran three times round the ring at the top of my speed, and trumpeted so loudly that the Audience fled in terror!*

The Prince Alemguir and Saphire-of-Heaven were in the box, but I had not seen them at first, so blinded was I by tears.

They had sent for the Director of the Circus, and I now understood they were speaking to him of my ransom.

He showed himself very modest and dignified in the presence of the King and Queen of Golconda, and declared with great frankness that he did not own me, but had only engaged me with my actual master, and that I had so increased the profits of the company that he owed much to me, while nothing whatever was owing to him.

It was, therefore, as a gracious present that he accepted, after many protestations, the magnificent diamond which the King offered him, and a very handsome sum for distribution among the actors of the troupe.

Moukounj now approached, and I made the Princess understand that I did not wish him to be left behind. He conducted himself as well as he knew how, and they did not perceive that he was, as usual—drunk. It was agreed that he should go with us to Golconda.

All the Artists, in stage costume, were now assembled in the Ring.

I bade them good-bye as cordially as I could. . . . But already they seemed far, far away—as if forgotten, and veiled in mists and darkness. . . .

I had once more found my Light—my Life! I could not see nor think of anything else! And while the Champagne corks popped, and the glasses clinked in my honour, it was as if in a dream that I left forever the "Grand Circus of the Two Worlds"—absorbed in the great happiness of feeling once more on my neck the light weight of my beloved Princess, regained at last.

THE END

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